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ABSTRACT

This collection of articles on gender issues in second language education includes the following: "Colleagues Writing Together: The Evolution of an Edited Publication" (Christine Pearson Casanave, Amy D. Yamashiro); "Reflections on a Critical Approach to Language Teaching" (Alan J. McCornick); "Forging Alliances: Grassroots Feminist Language Education in the Tokyo Area" (Cheiron McMahill, Kate Reekie); "Transforming Teaching: Strategies for Engaging Female Learners" (Kumiko Fujimura-Fanselow); "A Socratic Approach to Fostering Gender-Balanced Discussions" (Jerome Young); "Teaching about Social Inequality and Gender in the Language Classroom" (Thomas Hardy); "The Portrayal of Males in Realistic Juvenile Fiction" (Mark Valens); "The 'Parfait Effect': Implications of a Tracking System on Perceptions of Male Adolescent Language Learners" (Yamashiro); "Sexist Language and Teaching English as a Foreign Language" (Jacqueline D. Beebe); "Blind to Our Own Language Use? Raising Linguistic and Sociolinguistic Awareness of Future JSL Teachers" (Yoko Tsuruta); and "The Paper Lunch: A Trialogue on Language, Gender, and Lunch" (David Freedman, Yoshiko Takahashi, Hisun Rim). All papers are in English; abstracts are in English and Japanese. (MSE)

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GENDER ISSUES IN LANGUAGE EDUCATION

Christine Pearson Casanave and Amy D. Yamashiro, Editors

クリスティン・ピアソン・カサネイブ & 山城 英美

Fumiko Kato, Assistant Editor

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- Christine Pearson Casanave
- David Freedman
- Kumiko Fujimura-Fanselow
- Thomas Hardy
- Alan J. McCornick
- Cheiron McMahill
- Kate Reekie
- Hisun Rim
- Yoshiko Takahashi
- Yoko Tsuruta
- Mark Valens
- Amy D. Yamashiro
- Jerome Young

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March 1996

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慶應義塾大学湘南藤沢キャンパス

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BILINGUAL ABSTRACTS

The article by Alan McCormick demonstrates the need for educators to integrate political concerns into language teaching. He argues that if "education is an engagement with chaos" and a "quest for positive change," then educators should teach critical thinking in their language classes. In such an approach, teachers and students work together using the target language to discuss values and biases, and to bring those biases to the surface. In this way, students learn to question the existing social order and gain a better understanding of how unequal power relations provide advantage to some people and disadvantage to others.

アラン・マコーニックは、教育者は社会的な関心を語学教育に取り入れる必要があると説いている。もし教育とは混乱の中に身をおくことであり、それが自分自身を発展させる探求の旅であるならば、語学教育の現場でも批判的な考え方が出来るような教育がなされるべきだと論じている。語学教育をこのようにみると、学生は今まで意識していなかった自分たちの価値観について、学習している外国語を使って教師と議論し、内包していた偏見や先入観をあぶり出すことができる。このような学習法により学生は現在の社会秩序に疑問の目を向け、その不平等な力関係が、ある人たちにとってはいかに都合良く働き、またある人たちにとっては不利に働いているかをより良く理解できるようになると述べている。

Cheiron McMahill and Kate Reekie focus their paper on how some feminists in the Tokyo area have used English education to teach other women to think critically. From interviews and first-hand experience, they document the efforts by Japanese and non-Japanese women to organize small English discussion groups. By creating an English-speaking environment, the participating women can develop a "cross-cultural feminist consciousness."

カイロン・マクメイヒルとケート・リーキーは、東京に住むフェミニストたちが女性がいかに英語教育を通して批判的なものの見方を教えるかに論点を絞っている。対談や自分たちの体験を通して、日本人と外国人女性が努力してディスカッションのための小グループを組織する過程を記録している。英語を話す環境を造ることで、参加者は文化的な背景の異なったフェミニスト意識を発展させることができると論じている。

Kumiko Fujimura-Fanselow explores how education can help transform women from being passive students to becoming active learners. In her paper, she argues against the belief that men behave one way and women another. Rather, she connects theoretical and practical issues to create an educational environment that encourages female students to think critically about relevant issues in their lives and to become active participants in their own educations.

クミコ・フジムラ=ファンスローは、教育がいかに女性を受動的な学生から能動的な学習者へと変革する助けとなるかを研究している。この論文で著者は、男性の行動と女性の行動とは異なるものであるという考え方に異を唱えている。むしろ、彼女はこの論文では理論上の問題と実際的な問題を結びつけ、女子学生が実生活に関わる問題に対して、批判的かつ積極的な考え方ができるような教育環境を造り上げようとしている。

Jerome Young describes how he uses a Socratic-style approach to help students and teachers to become more aware of inner values and biases. In particular, he wishes to ensure that the female students in his classes have the opportunity to participate in classroom discussions. He argues that educators must raise their own awareness of biases ingrained as part of the socialization process.

ジェローム・ヤングは、ソクラテスの問答法を使い、どのようにして学生や教師が持つ内的価値観と偏見を意識させるようにするかを述べている。とりわけ、彼は女子学生に授業での討論に積極的に参加できるようにさせたいと考えている。この論文で著者は、教育者自身が、人は社会生活にとけ込む過程で深く根ざしている偏見のとりこであると自覚せねばならないと論じている。

Thomas Hardy takes an anthropological perspective on how to help students raise their awareness of the inequalities that exist in society, in particular, issues related to gender discrimination. After presenting his rationale for teaching a class on gender issues, he explains how he conducted this course and then shares some of his students' reflections. His students learn to view their own culture with new eyes.

トーマス・ハーディは、文化人類学的視点から実社会に存在する不平等、特に男女間の性差別の問題に関して、どのようにして学生の意識を高めるかを説いている。この論文で著者は、授業で性差別の問題を教えるための彼の理論的根拠を提示したあと、どのようにしてこのコースを指導したかを説明し、学生たちがこのコースに関してどのような印象を持ったかを読者に紹介している。著者によると、学生はこのコースのあと自分たちの文化を今までとは違った視点から捉えるようになるという。

Mark Valens reports on a first-language study of how males are portrayed in realistic young-adult literature. Valens shows how the images of the male characters have become more complex in recent times. He recommends that educators who use literature to carefully examine the characters, so that they can avoid reinforcing existing stereotypes.

マーク・ベイレンズは、英語で書かれた若者向けの写実文学では、男性がいかにか描かれているかという研究に関して論じている。著者によると、男性の登場人物のイメージは近年非常に複雑になってきているという。従って文学を語学教育に使う者は、登場人物を入念に研究し、現存する型にはまった男性のイメージが強化されるのを避けるべきだと主張している。

Amy D. Yamashiro asks educators to question their assumptions about lower-proficiency male adolescent language learners. She takes the reader into the classroom through a combination of observation and reports from the students themselves, their peers, and their teachers. She urges educators to take a fresh look at their students to avoid reinforcing gender stereotypes.

山城英美は、クラスの成績の低位にいる思春期の男子の語学学習者について否定的な見方を持っている教育者は、その意見に疑いの目を持つべきだと論じている。彼女は、自らの授業の観察に基づく所見と、学生自身、彼らのクラスメート、教師たちから寄せられたさ

さまざまな質問事項への回答報告とを組み合わせた研究を通して、読者に授業の様子を紹介している。その結果、著者は男子学生、女子学生といった性に基づく固定観念を排し、教育者は学生には先入観のない新鮮な目を向けるよう主張している。

Jacqueline Beebe approaches the issue of gender in language education from a linguistic perspective, claiming that the linguistic and political dimensions of language use are inseparable. After reviewing the literature on sexist language in English, she describes how she raises student awareness through a variety of classroom activities.

ジャックリーヌ・ビービは、言語学的視点から語学教育における性差別問題に取り組む。英語の性差別語に関する文献を検証した上で、著者は学生の問題意識を高めるさまざまな授業活動を紹介している。

Yoko Tsuruta's paper looks at sexist language from the perspective of a Japanese as a second language (JSL) educator. She describes her struggle to help her students to analyze their own use of language, about which they tend to have many misconceptions. Once her students become aware of naturally occurring language, they are willing to move away from teaching only prescribed "feminine" language to their future female JSL students.

鶴田庸子は、日本語を外国語（JSL）として教える教師の立場から論文の焦点を性差別語に絞っている。著者は、学生が自らの言葉づかいを研究分析するように指導するのがいかに大変か、しかし学生がいったん自分たちが何気なく使っている言葉を意識するようになると、自分たちが将来教えるであろうJSLの女子学生に、ただ単に決まり切った「女性の言葉づかい」を教えるという考えを捨てるようになると論じている。

The final paper in the monograph, a multi-authored article, shows how formal feminine expressions in Japanese are interpreted by two of the authors, Yoshiko Takahashi, a native speaker of Japanese, and Hisun Rim, an advanced non-native speaker. David Freedman acts as the mediator as the two women discuss their conflicting views on the Japanese language. Takahashi does not see *keigo* as an oppressive tool for women, whereas Rim does. Freedman concludes that it is not the real nature of the language, but its perceived nature that may be the source of the two different views.

最後の3人の共著論文では、日本語における敬語が二人の著者のアイデンティティにどのように影響しているかが論じられている。一人は日本語を母国語とする高橋良子、もう一人は外国語として日本語を学んだヒサン・リムで、リムは日本語の上級者である。デイビッド・フリードマンは仲介役として、二人の日本語に関しての異なった意見を発展させている。この論文で、高橋は敬語の使用を性差別の表れとはとらない。一方リムは自分の韓国系アメリカ人という立場から敬語表現の中に性差別をかぎつけ、その結果日本語の敬語習得が困難であったと述べている。フリードマンは、このことから語学の学習者にとって習得しようとしている外国語そのものよりも、その外国語をどのように見るか（perception）によって習得の難易が決まるのではないかと推測している。

INTRODUCTION

**COLLEAGUES WRITING TOGETHER:
THE EVOLUTION OF AN EDITED PUBLICATION**

Christine Pearson Casanave and Amy D. Yamashiro

This volume is the third in a series of thematic monographs that we have compiled in the past several years at Keio University's Shonan Fujisawa Campus on the broad topic of issues in language education in Japan. The experience of producing the monographs has given many people, both from Keio SFC and increasingly from other universities, the opportunity to put into written form some of the ideas and issues we deal with as part of our teaching and other scholarly pursuits. The thematic nature of the monographs allows authors to focus on a particular area in language education, yet to discuss their topics from a variety of perspectives and discourse styles. Readers thus benefit by sharing multiple perspectives as they construct or revise their own views in discussions with their colleagues and students.

However, the primary purpose of the monograph projects has not been to present a definitive or complete overview of a thematic area. The purposes are more diverse than this. Over and above the thematic, theoretical, and pedagogical purposes is the procedural one of bringing together people (many of whom have not written for publication before) in a collegial writing group. It is the series of discussions that ensue over several months, in two or three long and intensive meetings, that makes the experience so rewarding intellectually, and that results ultimately in papers that make for valuable reading. This happens because the papers we write receive attention and care that are rarely allocated to edited volumes or to articles printed in local university publications. But more importantly, the quality of our collegial interactions during the peer-discussion process surpasses the quality of engagement that most of us experience as part of our normal work life. Unlike in the routine activities of our work, we allow ourselves time to push and pull each other's intellects, to help each other find words for difficult or fuzzy ideas, and to listen to and learn from each other. Learning to learn from each other is not always easy. We have all relearned the lesson many times that it is easier to dish out criticism than it is to take it, that criticism can be couched as an attack or as a valuable suggestion, and that people (students and colleagues alike) respond to positive comments with a willingness to continue working.

Not all the papers we start with end up in print. As we write and think together, some people find that their ideas are not yet developed enough to be articulated clearly, or that plans for a project underestimated the time required to complete it, or that other demands rob essential

time from the revising process. This in no way means that the discussions we hold waste some people's time to the benefit of a few. On the contrary, regardless of the final status of a paper, most of us find that our minds are stretched and that we discover new facets of our colleagues' minds as we wrestle with difficult issues.

We have asked ourselves why we do not seem to be able to set up such intensive discussion groups without the motivating trigger of a major writing project. We try on our campus, for example, to meet semi-formally at least once a semester to discuss an issue related to language teaching and learning, with or without a guest speaker. While these meetings do bring some of us together for intellectual rather than only work-related purposes, the meetings always seem to end just as we are beginning to find our way into a topic. We talk about continuing the discussion, but find the rest of the semester slipping by us, and by the following semester we are ready to move on to something else.

By contrast, the monograph writing project continues throughout a semester, with deadlines imposed by printing schedules that we cannot alter. People who commit to the project are in a sense trapped by these deadlines, but it is this very entrapment that pushes us to meet regularly and to respond in writing to people's work. Moreover, we know that at the end of the semester we will have in our hands a concrete product, one that we can justifiably feel proud of, one that contributes to the professional status of each author, and one that we know readers will appreciate. We cannot easily achieve this intensity, the depth of thought, the stretching of our intellects over time without the knowledge that the final product of our efforts will become public within six months. Let's face it: just as is the case for most of our students, deadlines work.

How do we decide what the theme will be for an edited publication? For the first two volumes, *Pedagogical Perspectives on Journal Writing* (Keio SFC Monograph #3) and *Film and Foreign Language Teaching: Pedagogical Perspectives* (Keio SFC Monograph #4), we chose broad themes related to the kinds of teaching that many of us were doing in the hope that we could interest a wide variety of people in submitting articles. This year, we chose a broad issue-oriented theme, that of gender issues in language education. We chose this theme first because we as editors feel strongly that it has not received enough attention in the literature on foreign and second language education, particularly in Japan. We also have noted that many educators are increasingly using gender issues as topics for current event discussions or as thematic units within content-based language courses (courses that encourage students to *use* the target language for acquiring knowledge [Brinton, Snow & Wesche, 1989]). It is easy to see the appeal for educators of topics such as "the family," "gender roles," and "sexuality" for their ability to generate high interest, for the comparative ease in relating them to student experience, and for the accessibility of authentic materials where language learning can be contextualized in a realistic and pragmatic form.

The decision to focus on gender issues in language education, rather than on women or feminism, was a conscious one. In order to make this monograph inclusive for many potential writers and yet retain the zest and promise of controversy, we sought a topic for which both novice and experienced teachers could explore and share ideas as peers. It was surprisingly easy to find writers who were willing to commit to the extensive writing process outlined earlier, due to their motivation to write on a topic that combined personal meaning with professional relevance. While some of the contributors are self-proclaimed feminists, others became further interested in the topic as a result of teaching students about social inequality or from observing gender biases (involving males as well as females) in the classroom. For readers inspired to pursue this area further, Sunderland (1994) provides an excellent literature review as well as a comprehensive annotated bibliography in her edited volume, *Exploring Gender: Questions and Implications for English Language Education*. Fujimura-Fanselow and Kameda (1995) have produced a fine collection of original and translated essays to contextualize gender issues within Japan.

We conclude our introductory essay by introducing the articles, all of which were written specifically for this volume.

In the lead article, Alan McCornick makes a strong case for integrating political concerns into our educational activities, including into language pedagogy. Claiming that “education is an engagement with chaos” and a “quest for positive change,” he argues that critical approaches to education belong in our language classes. In such an approach, teachers and students work together in the foreign language medium to bring hidden values and biases to the surface, to question the status quo, and to understand how unequal power relations (such as those between men and women) work in society to the advantage of some and the disadvantage of others. Cheiron McMahill and Kate Reekie continue the focus on critical pedagogy in their paper on grassroots feminist education in the Tokyo area. From interviews and first hand experience, they document several different efforts by Japanese and nonJapanese women to organize small local groups for the purposes of creating an English-speaking environment in which to develop a “cross-cultural feminist consciousness.” In a third paper that is concerned with transformative education, Kumiko Fujimura-Fanselow links theoretical and practical issues in a way that avoids essentialist dichotomies such as male/female. Committed to the belief that much behavior labeled “female” is learned (and can thus be unlearned or transformed), she discusses how she helps her women students learn to think critically about issues in their lives and to become active participants in a critical dialogue about these issues.

In the next paper, Jerome Young describes a specific approach he uses to help students and himself as a teacher become more aware of hidden values and biases, ingrained as part of the socialization process. In particular, Young wishes to ensure that the female students in his

classes, many of whom hesitate to assert their ideas in the presence of a more dominant (often male) classmate, have the opportunity to participate in the decision-making processes in discussions of ethical issues. He urges all teachers to look closely at their own classes for similar biases. In his paper, Thomas Hardy takes an anthropological perspective on how to help his students develop insights into the issue of gender-related aspects of social inequality. After presenting a rationale for teaching a content class on gender and social inequality, Hardy takes us through the instructional phases he employs in such a course, which compares aspects of social inequality in the United States and Japan. Using discussion, films, and team projects, he helps his intermediate level English students see their own culture with new eyes. His paper concludes with an assessment of the strengths and weakness of his approach.

Mark Valens' contribution differs from the others in that it reports on a first-language study of how males are portrayed in children's literature. With implications for second language educators who use literature and textbooks as class materials, Valens shows how the images of the male characters in the children's books that he analyzed fit only partially the stereotypes we often associate with males (as being aggressive, dominant, unemotional). He found that the actual behavior and character traits of males were far more complex than this stereotype would suggest, and depended greatly on the context and situation of the action in the stories. He urges language teachers to take a second look at the books they use and to discover not only the obvious male and female stereotypes, but also the images that may counter those stereotypes. Amy D. Yamashiro also looks at stereotypes of males, in this case of the young adolescent males at lower proficiency levels of English. As a result of her observations, interviews, and questionnaires with students and teachers, she has become concerned that the negative labels that attach to some of these students will follow them throughout their junior high and high school English education, particularly where there is a tracking system in place, with adverse consequences for their learning.

Jacqueline Beebe approaches the issue of gender in language education much more from a linguistic perspective than do the previous contributors, while at the same time highlighting the political dimensions of language use. She reviews some of the literature that analyzes sexist language, gives a rationale for why she believes her English students benefit from learning more about it, and describes some of the class activities she uses to enhance students' awareness. Yoko Tsuruta's contribution also deals with sexist language, but from the perspective of teachers of Japanese as a second language, where JSL teachers must decide whether and how to teach women students to use "feminine expressions" in different levels of formality in Japanese. Finding that her women students who are studying to become teachers of Japanese are unaware of how they themselves use language, Tsuruta describes how she struggles to help them analyze their own use of their native Japanese. She believes that once future language teachers observe the ways they themselves use language in natural settings (develop a "linguistic meta-

consciousness”), they are then in a position to decide what role “feminine expressions” will play in their teaching. The monograph concludes with a multi-authored paper also on the topic of feminine formal language in Japanese, and the role such language plays in the identities of two of the authors: Yoshiko Takahashi, a native speaker of Japanese, and Hisun Rim, an advanced nonnative speaker. Written engagingly as a “dialogue” with colleague David Freedman over lunch, the two women discuss their conflicting views about the political and personal dimensions of gender-and class-related aspects of language, with Freedman playing the role of mediator-reflector.

Taken as a whole, the papers in the monograph clearly stress the need for language teachers and students to recognize the extent to which gender-related issues pervade our language and lives in ways that are as political as they are pedagogical, and indeed to recognize that the two cannot be separated. We urge educators to construct an instructional atmosphere in whatever ways they can that will help them and their students develop this awareness.

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REFLECTIONS ON A CRITICAL APPROACH TO LANGUAGE TEACHING

Alan J. McCormick

Teaching and Learning as Subjective Activity

The many attempts to create a science of pedagogy have never entirely overshadowed teaching and learning as art. Ask ten people to describe a classroom at work and you can get ten different descriptions. One can focus on teaching style, text or content, student interest and motivation, student performance, learner/teacher relationships, or on the larger educational context. Within each area, one can shift background and foreground at will. And what is going on on the surface may conceal what is going on underneath. And whatever is going on in the minds of those engaged, it is hardly a controlled scientific activity.

Unfortunately, education has been savaged with regularity by those who would make it science, who would cut and limit, regulate and mold the work of schools into manageable pieces. With good reason (desire to eliminate waste and inefficiency) and bad (fear of chaos and diversity) the desire for control drives ministries of education and other regulating bodies to see the individual learner as background, and other, more controllable parts of the job such as textbook content and allocation of time and resources as foreground. One cannot make the horse drink, but one can control his access to water.

But education remains an engagement with chaos. Distinguished from training (the acquisition of skills and the formation of good habits) and from indoctrination (the absorption of ideology not reflected upon), and from schooling (the transmission of culture), education is a reach into the unknown and a quest for positive change. And unlike the cramming of facts and other isolating forms of knowledge acquisition, education is a reach beyond the local, the parochial, and received truths, beyond the tribal gods and the self. Not only lay people, but even teachers often confuse education with schooling. Their world is constrained by the need to evaluate and grade. Often their jobs and salary are dependent on their success at inculcating a particular body of knowledge. Schooling is a seductive substitute for education.

Language pedagogy is particularly susceptible to this seduction. Acknowledged as a skill and impossible without the memorization of thousands of small pieces of information, language proficiency is a goal which on the surface at least seems to be unrelated to the pursuit of education. What does the acquisition of the ability to communicate with a linguistic and cultural other have to do with the quest for positive change?

The Field of TESOL

It wasn't that long ago that the stuff of TESOL (Teachers of English to Speakers of Other Languages), JALT (Japan Association of Language Teachers), and other language conferences, as well as master's and other credentialing programs, focussed on linguistic form to the exclusion of larger social, not to mention moral, issues. When the shift came in linguistics towards pragmatics and ever larger fields of discourse, however, language pedagogy followed suit. What thirty years ago was foreground--the shift from the written to the spoken word, micro issues of phonetics and phonology, and behavioristically-based teaching methods--has now become background. Foreground is the whole individual communicating in a social context. This means the teacher, often naturally inclined to do so anyway, now has disciplinary support to stress general education over specific content. The implications of this shift are profound. For one thing, with teachers focussing on students rather than on linguistic form, they are readily drawn into debates on the meaning of higher education. Curriculum, instead of being an area best left to experts, becomes everybody's business. The desire to inform is replaced in part by the desire to engage and language teachers find themselves asking the same questions as teachers in other disciplines--where are the students, and why are we doing this?

Politics are never very far from education and from time to time politics take center stage. With the fall of communism as a focal point, cultural conservatives and social transformationists in the United States turned their attention recently to each other and the battle over multiculturalism was on. That battle is still raging and no one asking questions about curriculum and the purpose of education can avoid reflecting on whether it should be the continued transmission of the ideas of the Enlightenment or a more radical transformation of society to bring in hitherto silenced voices.

That battle, in turn, is informed by the larger philosophical conflict between the purveyors of the enlightenment project as a universal human accomplishment and postmodern critique of this project as a wolf in grandma's clothing, a gift to the world which works mostly to the benefit of the European patriarchy. Central to this debate is the confrontation between those with the upper hand, the power structure, generally identified in English-speaking countries as white (not colored), male (not female), heterosexual (not gay or bisexual), among other things such as physically able. Outside of English-speaking countries many find it curious that sex is in and class is out. Perhaps because of the legacy of the cold war and the demonization of marxism (although marxists would argue I've got the cause and effect reversed), class is underplayed in America. And perhaps because of the puritan tradition of seeing morality in sexual terms, with a resultant oppression of non-procreative, particularly gay sexuality, sexual liberation has loomed large. In any case, these

categories are not arbitrary, but reflect the struggle for the power to define culture in every one of the societies of the English-speaking peoples. Anyone studying English who engages to any degree in modern culture gets to engage with these questions. Because of the widespread use of English and the hegemony of the English-speaking people, these debates spill over into other traditions, and because the debates today increasingly take place with reference to postmodernist theory, they are no longer exclusively anglophone debates anyway.

The language teacher very quickly finds herself, in other words, out in the world at large. To leave the world of vocabulary and syntax, notional-functional syllabuses and role playing exercises, in other words, is to engage in a world of ideas. A language learner who places her own education before any particular technical accomplishments has to engage with the larger world of conflicts, to communicate with cultural others across ideological boundaries and to establish, along with the acquisition of "language" the voice of a communicator with a grounded set of perspectives.

Critical Pedagogy

John Dewey has made the case that teaching never takes place in a vacuum. One does not teach, one teaches something to someone. And what a learner learns may or may not coincide with what a teacher thinks she is teaching. Unlike most commercial schools of language, test driven by the need to bank facts about language, university language programs have, at least on some level, a mandate for focussing primarily on education, and only secondarily on any particular subject matter. Language classes remain structured by the necessity to demonstrate increasing proficiency in foreign language ability, but since such proficiency has been found to increase faster as language becomes the means, rather than the object, of study, there is seldom a conflict in language classes between the pursuit of educational goals and the teaching of language. The effective language classroom, like any other classroom, is one in which education, as opposed to training or indoctrination, rote-learning, or other demonstrations of obedience for its own sake, takes place.

Since Dewey, the most serious questioning of the goal of education as I have defined it has been done by Paolo Freire and his followers. In the introduction to a volume entitled *Teaching to Transgress: Education as the Practice of Freedom*, bell hooks (1994) (she writes her name, like e.e. cummings, without caps), one of his followers in America, talks about her experience as an undergraduate at Stanford.

...It surprised and shocked me to sit in classes where professors were not excited about teaching, where they did not seem to have a clue that education was about the practice of freedom. During college, the primary lesson was reinforced: we were to

learn obedience to authority.... I was tormented by the classroom reality.... The vast majority of our professors...often used the classroom to enact rituals of control. (p. 4)

The banking system of education, in which knowledge is taken to be information that can be stored and used at a later date, has crushed the excitement of discovery in more than a few young minds who came to formal learning with a natural inclination toward critical thinking. When language learning is defined solely in terms of technical proficiency, it makes sense to argue one must learn to walk before one can run and to design curricula in which form and procedure are foreground and students are background instead of the other way around. If we focus on the learner, however, we become aware in a matter of days, if not hours, of how the learner's desire to communicate can readily become not only the motivation for language learning but the content as well. How often, instead of encouraging this voice to talk, we tell it to parrot instead.

bell hooks' view of teaching reflects Freire's thought that teaching is a performative act, an opportunity for invention and spontaneity, an engagement with others who believe change is possible, a way of pulling each other up and out of the local, the limited, the provincial. Freire (1968) calls education the practice of freedom because it reflects a belief that anyone can learn, that no one loses and everyone gains because the so-called teachers share in the discovery of the so-called learners, and ultimately in the spiritual growth that comes with leaving the limitations of imposed categories behind.

Education, says Freire, is the pursuit of critical awareness, action and reflection upon the world in order to change it. Freire's ideal is in opposition to the so-called banking system of education, which separates the learner from what is learned, and the teacher from what is taught. When the goal is acquisition of facts, it becomes irrelevant to talk of moral education. That's something to be done outside of class, in the privacy of one's room perhaps, not in the common space. When the teacher is not whole, when she is conveniently compartmentalized into a mind here and a body there, there is no accountability for life practices, for roles played in the larger world. What does it matter if a man beats his wife, as long as he "knows his stuff." What does it matter if one is emotionally unstable if one "gets the job done." Writing of her disillusionment with undergraduate study at Stanford, hooks (1994) says:

"...(T)he only important aspect of our identity was whether or not our minds functioned, whether we were able to do our jobs in the classroom. The self was presumably emptied out the moment the threshold was crossed, leaving in place only an objective mind--free of experiences and biases. There was fear that the conditions of that self would interfere with the teaching process. (pp. 16-17)

Even novice teachers discover early on how much more readily students respond

when one remembers their names, how much better they perform when they have responsibility for designing their own education. When students get to see that their own education moves or stumbles at their own command they are free to break away from a teacher-controlled learning environment. This break represents the move from schooling for socialization to education. Although it can happen earlier, it seems to happen in most places, if at all, at the threshold to the university. I say if at all because old habits such as students' dependency on teachers and teachers' desire for control are strong and well-settled by the time a student is eighteen.

Nevertheless, the more one demonstrates the conviction that a learner has the right to set her own agenda, the conviction that one can learn to learn, can learn to think, can learn to recognize limitations in herself and others and move on anyway, the less one has to depend on others to set the learning agenda and the means of evaluation and the more attractive the learning project becomes.

With the student calling the shots, the teacher has to redefine her role. What better role than that of educator/trouble maker? Devil's advocate when nobody else will be, supporter of risk-takers, first among equals. The more one releases the traditional teacher/knower role, the more one engages as an (albeit older, even sometimes unavoidably intimidating) co-learner, the greater the stake every learner has in getting into the act. Some will resist because the training is so thorough, the expectations so high that it is the teacher's job to set the agenda and drive the herd. Others simply have other things to do they consider more important. When control is not the issue, this is a risk one must take. Tying children to the piano bench sometimes makes them technically more proficient but it doesn't motivate the desire for positive change.

Cultural Transmission vs. Social Transformation

Such talk makes many people in the university uncomfortable. To tout education as the means of transforming society is to invite chaos, to relinquish authority, to downplay a teacher's knowledge and experience. And it begs the question "which way?" Isn't education supposed to be cultural transmission? Who are you to call for social transformation? One cannot engage in critical pedagogy without a knowledge of self, a conviction that injustice is transitory but held in place by the faint-hearted, and an understanding that the status quo is not in everyone's interest.

How is one to deal with the charge that support of cultural diversity is not merely a substitute of one "dictatorship of knowing" for another? The modern university, despite its bureaucratically inclined controllers, is still driven not by the traditionalists of the world, but by those who would transform it. The greater the success in throwing off the power of

others to force you in a direction not of your choosing (whether you see that power as patriarchal hegemony or any other lockstep tyranny) the greater the responsibility to engage in open debate over how to share the power to determining alternate directions. The language classroom, like any other classroom, will take up into its content, the battle for the mind of the engaged student. Thirty years ago I was told to keep religion, politics and sex out of the language classroom. Those were the taboos of the day (there are others now) and I instinctively realized these must be the three most interesting topics to bring into the language classroom. A decision not to engage is to choose ignorance, and to anyone genuinely interested in education, a choice for ignorance is not a choice.

As opposed to the approach to education taken by "great books" advocates, for example, teaching from the perspective of critical pedagogy, means facing complaints like, "I thought this was supposed to be an English class! Why are we talking so much about feminism/ abortion/ street people/ racism/ political corruption, etc.?" Why indeed? Look at the alternatives. Debates over whether smoking is good for you, whether life in the city is better than life in the country and other stuff of ESL classrooms designed by teachers whose only interest in the subject matter is in being able to control it, makes of the learning experience a holding pattern, a card game in a doctor's waiting room, a trash novel in an air terminal. It doesn't have to be the street people. You tell me what really counts. If you suggest we discuss the food in the cafeteria, I'll tell you to keep going until you get to something that counts with me as well. We'll find it. And in the process, in seeking a way to tackle a common problem neither of us has yet found a solution to, in case you haven't noticed, you're retaining vocabulary at a much faster rate than before because the words have a reason for sticking.

There is another reason for not starting with the forms and leaving the content for later. In the first place, a refusal to engage in issues requiring emotional involvement is as much a teacher's lesson as an invitation to combine talk with something worth talking about. An invitation to education accompanied by a resolve to avoid pain or discomfort is fundamentally dishonest. Positive change involves the casting off of values and relations accepted without reflection. It involves critical analysis of the self in the learning process and a commitment to seeing how one stands in relation to others. As long as our classrooms are comprised of both the more enlightened and the lesser enlightened, an open and engaged classroom will have to deal with the confrontation of both kinds of views. To avoid conflict is to avoid the challenge of change and to avoid that challenge is to subvert the potential for education.

The Issue of Gender in the Classroom

Issues of gender are a case in point. Not even if one is tempted to accept the argument that one should "keep politics out of it," to make language teaching descriptive rather than prescriptive (this is the way women talk; I'm not interested in how you think they should talk), can one avoid the place gender has assumed in the study of language. Deborah Tannen's (1994) study of male and female language has moved the question of language and gender out of the academic world into popular consciousness. In the United States, for example, white middle-class women tend to ask more questions, whereas men tend to interrupt more and listen less to what women are saying than the other way around, findings that are now part of what constitutes the knowledge of the discipline of linguistics which informs the language classroom. Feminists and others taking a multicultural perspective see this as justification for a revised curriculum which places them in the center instead of on the periphery of education. You can go along with this or resist this. But either way, you make a political decision.

Over the past several years at Keio SFC, I have enjoyed the freedom to engage with students at intermediate and advanced levels of English both in language classes, in volunteer discussion groups, and in seminars, which I conduct in English, in a way which permits open discussion and the exploration of student agendas. I provide the framework, which suits both me and the university administration, and students provide the content, initially in the form of response to my agenda. One of my first seminars, under the rubric of Intercultural Communication, was called "Western Perspectives on Japan." During the course of that semester, it became clear to me that many of our issues were ethical issues, and I followed the next semester with an attempt to explore the concept of transcultural ethics. Simultaneously, the pandemic of AIDS reached into our lives, and I led a seminar entitled "Cultural Perspectives on the AIDS Crisis" which I repeated twice. Those discussions had a profound personal impact, because I was forced to deal with some of the sorrow I thought I was escaping by leaving San Francisco, where AIDS is on everybody's lips, for Japan, where for a while it was almost never mentioned.

Another outcome of these discussions was the awareness that in many parts of the world AIDS was having a devastating impact on women's lives, largely because of their powerlessness to say no to sex, and this led to an exploration of various liberation movements, and to the topic of feminism. My students, now seniors, were getting their first dose of gender inequality as they went out looking for jobs. Men learned the meaning of privilege, and women, one of whom was told she had no need to work because her father was rich, the meaning of discrimination.

Officially, I am a professor in the Faculty of Environmental Information. When

asked, I identify myself as a teacher of English. Both of these designations are misleading, but they serve as well as any. Neither of them reveals what I have been doing for the last seven years of engagement with Keio SFC students. Nor does it reveal what they have taught me. The experience has not changed any of my fundamental identities, but it has sharpened my awareness of them all. I am a tenured European-American male professor, can still see and hear and run fast despite my age, and I commute between two developed countries. I am conscious of the privilege that comes to me from fitting into each of these categories. I am also working class in origin, gay-identified, profeminist, and a foreigner to most of the people with whom I come in contact and I am conscious of how my tendency to weave myself in and out of these categories and to allow others to weave away as well allows me to change focus. I take a multiplicity of perspectives to be essential to the development of professional ethics in teaching.

My students, all Japanese, male and female in approximately equal numbers, all bring another set of identifiers and the longer my contact with Japan, the less it is a place of the cultural "other" and the more readily I perceive the diversity of these identifiers. My students are highly directed or floating aimlessly through their university years. They are other-oriented or self-preoccupied. They think the bombing of Hiroshima was a moral outrage or a necessary step in ending the war. They are curious about why Danes of the same sex can marry, why Dutch doctors can practice euthanasia, why there is violence in American cities, bride-burning in India, female genital mutilation in Africa, and they want to talk about it. All of these topics have arisen in groups free to set their own agenda for content-based classes of English and English-medium seminars. All of them involve a questioning of the way the world works and how value systems clash, including those of men and women as a class. While gender in the language classroom is only occasionally center stage, gender relations frequently frame a discussion of power and how it operates.

The question is not whether gender plays a role in language learning; it obviously does because the questions of the day, the questions framing the consciousness of our students and thus the learning environment, are fundamental existential questions. Do men control women? How? What are the consequences? Are men and women different? How? Does communication between the sexes (or lack of it) affect the learning environment? Is there anything we can or should do about it? Do men and women have different ways of knowing? Are these differences rooted in biology or in cultural practice? Should we minimize these differences? Take them into consideration or work as if they were not there? Should social (educational and other) policies reflect these differences? Whose goals are met if we go on pretending these questions do not affect the learning environment?

The question is whether those of us who are responsible for curriculum (i.e., anybody with a classroom) allow for democratic involvement of everyone involved.

Whether the defenders of the status quo can keep talking instead of running for the cops when challenged, whether those inclined to speak in well-modulated voices can learn to listen to the less well-modulated. Whether we shy away from conflict or whether we have the courage to bring it all in, politics and cultural bias, social class and economic domination, the AIDS crisis, censorship and taboo, the growth of minority consciousness, Comfort Women, the atomic bomb, and every other aspect of life that puts us in the position of having to choose whether to limit our interaction or open ourselves up to learning from one another.

Afterword

The approach to teaching and learning I have urged here suggests to many, by its setting of student and teacher on an equal footing, that students must be in possession of native or near-native English proficiency skills. While I concede that with very low proficiency students a teacher's "input" is inevitably more instruction than interaction, it need not remain so for long. Two things separate the teacher as "knower" from the student as "learner" in traditional language classes: the need to use the target only (which gives the teacher an obviously upper hand) and the belief that one should divide acquisition of forms from language use, that one must first learn the language (in grammar and vocabulary classes, for example) before one can "perform" in it (as in a conversation class). A third virus in the system, which fortunately not all teachers fall victim to, is the tendency to equate language proficiency with intelligence, and therefore to leave the hard issues for advanced language classes. When students understand the full impact of responsibility for their own instruction, they can break through these barriers, as most of the world's language learners do in real life. How often we forget that most people do not learn a second or foreign language in schools. They never have. Because we associate sheltered learning environments with children, we often carry our knower/teacher/adult personae into the classroom inappropriately. Complex issues can be dealt with at all levels of language proficiency; one simply has to become comfortable in the knowledge that a good performance is no substitute for a meaningful exchange.

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**FORGING ALLIANCES:
GRASSROOTS FEMINIST LANGUAGE EDUCATION
IN THE TOKYO AREA**

Cheiron McMahill and Kate Reekie

Introduction to Grassroots Feminist Language Education

When one thinks of feminist pedagogy in Japan, what inevitably springs to mind is the growing number of Women's Studies classrooms emerging throughout the country at the post-secondary level. Likewise, when one thinks of language education, the most accessible image is that of the large-scale, private language schools where time is money, and the balance sheet above all defines class content. While both of these trends are clearly visible in mainstream media and research, there also lurks in the background an elusive movement towards grassroots feminist language education, which has developed from within in response to a growing awareness of the limitations of these macro structures in nurturing any kind of true cross-cultural feminist consciousness.

In grassroots feminist language education, the participants are feminists in search of a second language or cross-cultural partnerships in order to engage more fully in activist or feminist work, and the goal of the classes extends beyond mere language acquisition to the empowerment of participants. Through first-hand experience and interviews with participants, we identify in this paper four distinct modes of grassroots feminist English-Japanese language education that are currently operating in the Tokyo area. They are: (1) peer tutoring and collaboration between Japanese and English-speaking feminists; (2) peer language exchange with a facilitator at women's events; (3) small, informal groups organized by Japanese or English-speaking learners using the services of a paid or volunteer feminist instructor; and (4) small schools coordinated by a paid manager in which classes are taught by feminists.

As members of the feminist community in Japan who have been active in grassroots feminist language education, we are keenly aware of the lack of research done on this subject to date. However we believe that this movement poses a critical challenge to the hegemony of conventional educational institutions in Japan, and as such is worthy of further study. In the absence of prior research, we start from scratch, taking the explicitly political orientation

of participatory action research¹, whereby "...participants study themselves, name the problems that need to be researched, collect data, and analyse them, thus generating their own knowledge, and ultimately produce plans for action based on the results of the research" (Auerbach, 1994, pp. 694- 695).

This paper contributes to an understanding of grassroots feminist language education through an examination of a number of scenarios being acted out in the Tokyo area, highlighting the respective benefits and drawbacks of the four formats enumerated above. Motivations for why we chose these over more traditional settings are then explored, and in the process, grassroots feminist language education emerges as a means of resistance, not only against the content, but also against the pedagogical practice of Japan's dominant educational paradigms.

Since with this kind of self-directed learning, students play a key role in setting up and managing the classes, they also are in a unique position to control or share control over the whole learning situation, in contrast to their position in mainstream educational institutions. With this power, however, come also tensions and conflicts between the expectations and experiences of the participants, including how to redefine and redistribute the responsibilities of student, teacher, and administrator. A commitment to the process of renegotiating roles and power, then, may be crucial to the success of feminist language education.

Bronwyn Norton Peirce (1989) has argued that if a "pedagogy of possibility" truly is on the agenda with respect to language education, it is not only self-directed learning, but also empowerment which ought to be emphasized. The distinction which she makes between the two is that "whereas the self-directed learner is encouraged to take greater responsibility for success in learning, the empowered learner is encouraged to take greater responsibility for success in life"(p. 408), where 'success' is defined as the learner's "critical appreciation of his or her own subjectivity and relationship to the wider society" (p. 409). Thus, a pedagogy which challenges hierarchical structures within the confines of the classroom is necessary but insufficient to truly prepare students for the challenges which lie outside. In the grassroots language education situations in the Tokyo area which we explore here, such empowerment is also a potentiality.

¹ Whenever a citation is not given, the data and comments that form the bulk of the research for this paper are from interviews and questionnaires conducted in October and November, 1995, or from personal experience.

The Crucial Mix: Locally-Defined Needs and External Pedagogical Influences

Alternative sites of feminist language teaching, learning, and exchange have been in existence in the Kanto region since the early 1980s, yet what do we know of their historical and ideological roots? While it is clear that the impetus for the development of such innovative forms of study have been largely endogenously-defined and articulated by the learners themselves, the role of imported pedagogical influences, specifically of critical and feminist pedagogies, has also been great.

The liberatory philosophy of education espoused by Brazilian educator Paulo Freire since the late 1950s has influenced the emergence of alternative, non-formal education worldwide. His groundbreaking view that the purpose of education should be to encourage a critical inquiry into one's social reality comes from a conviction that even the most disempowered have the ability to actively transform the very society which marginalizes them. Education thus becomes an exciting vehicle for self-awareness and liberation. Freire's critique of the "banking" method of education, whereby "education... becomes an act of depositing, in which the students are the depositories, and the teacher is the depositor (of knowledge)" (Freire 1990, p. 58) has come to be operationalized as "popular education" or "critical pedagogy," whereby the starting point is the concrete experience of the learners. In contextualizing this experience within broader historical or cross-cultural frameworks, new knowledge is then generated, leading to action for social change.

Popular education principles have since been applied to English as a Second Language (ESL) teaching in the United States. Elsa Auerbach, for example, has advocated a problem-posing approach in ESL classes for immigrants. She proposes that many of the curricula and textbooks on "survival English" ignore and thus devalue the cultures and lived experiences of immigrants, while teaching them to conform to a white, middle-class view of how "good immigrants" behave. Instead, she suggests that teachers should elicit issues of concern to students, bring in catalysts for critical discussion, and work with students as facilitators to help them define real-life problems and seek solutions (1987, 1995).

Another area in which Freirean philosophy has been influential is in feminist pedagogy, which in recent years has also been heavily influenced by postmodern and cultural identity theorists (Weiler, 1994). As such, it challenges the universalist assumptions found in Freire's work, particularly in the formulation of such supposedly undifferentiated categories as "oppressor" and "oppressed" (hooks, 1994). In theory, this has meant a shift away from envisioning students as an equally marginalized homogenous mass seeking a common liberation strategy, and the deconstruction of terms like "woman" to recognize a multiplicity of positionings within that construct. In the classroom, it has meant the

introduction of methods which acknowledge those differences, while encouraging "cooperation, shared leadership, and democratic process" (Weiler, 1994, p. 36).

While grassroots feminist language education in Japan has been influenced by both critical and feminist pedagogical theory, it is also important to note that the uniquely gendered and multicultural social reality of Japan has also played a key role in its evolution. In Japan, the learning of languages, especially English, is a multi-billion dollar business. While it is used to establish and maintain an elite class², with English a key subject on entrance examinations for higher level school and work alike (Pennycook, 1995), English is also the main language of international activism and human rights work, including feminism. As women become increasingly aware of and dissatisfied with the discrepancy between their de facto and de jure rights as afforded by the Japanese constitution, English can be useful in helping them seek international support or inspiration. Furthermore, the perception of activists that state and legal institutions are more sensitive to foreign pressure ("gaiatsu") than to their own makes it crucial that their voices get heard in the outside world. At the recent Beijing Conference on Women, for example, as well as in work being done at the level of the United Nations on the issue of the former sex slaves of the Japanese Imperial Army, English has been an invaluable tool for Japanese feminists³.

Thus, there is clearly a need for a content-based language education program designed specifically for Japanese feminists. For those unable to enroll in Women's Studies programs in English, the only option may be to attend one of many private conversation schools, where feminist issues being taken up in class largely depends on the interest of their particular teacher. While most English teachers in such schools have no interest in dialectical feminist interfacing, in some cases, feminists do find themselves teaching in these institutions, and are eager to engage in meaningful feminist dialogue with the students. However, these schools have drawbacks for both teachers and students. While individual instructors can and do introduce feminist issues in conversation school classes, these efforts tend to be covert and made without the approval of the school administration. Also, to keep wages low, schools often hire inexperienced teachers and thus adopt a "teacher-proof"

² as it is in other societal contexts as well. See Peirce (1989) for a thought-provoking discussion on the moral dilemma of teaching English in a context where it may be reinforcing existing social hierarchies.

³This recognition that English may be necessary, as will be discussed later on in the paper, is not necessarily equated with a desire to emulate Western ideals of feminism, libertarianism, etc., and often these models are even blatantly rejected.

curriculum, leaving little room for instructor or student input into textbook or class content. Furthermore, many schools explicitly prohibit socializing between teachers and students, which interferes with the feminist goals of joint action and community-building. Finally, their exorbitant fees may be prohibitive, especially for women.

One common solution is for teachers and students to begin negotiating private classes directly with each other. This lowers the cost to students, increases the pay to instructors, and in the case of exchanges, eliminates the exchange of money altogether. It also allows participants to redefine their roles in terms of learners, teachers, and managers of learning. In this context, a number of explicitly feminist language classes and exchanges have emerged.

Feminist Language Education in Practice

Peer Tutoring

The first type of feminist language education which we have identified is peer tutoring, a relaxed, one-on-one venture which typically takes place in a coffeeshop or at the home of one of the participants. Usually, one half of the allotted time is spent in English and the other half in Japanese. In this setting more than any other, the participants take absolute control over their learning process, in that they are able to choose compatible partners, as well as a content and approach that match their interests, level, and personality. They can focus on their own needs without having to negotiate with classmates, and can make mistakes and share ideas with the most amount of privacy. Also, because it is a pure bartering of services, and no money ever changes hands, peer tutoring is accessible to the majority of women, for whom private language schools' tuition costs can be prohibitive.

Taking advantage of this opportunity, however, requires much discipline and self-awareness. Because of its informality, it can be easy to cancel meetings or not to prepare adequately. In the absence of careful monitoring, moreover, if one participant is much more advanced in their second language than the other, a disproportionate amount of time spent using one language may result. Although these are issues that can be worked through with discussion and self-education, this approach presupposes that the participants are able to at least identify their problems.

In many cases, these exchanges may break down and relationships become redefined as friendships, although this does not necessarily imply a failure. In fact, personal friendships are crucial to integrating the foreign feminist as a linguistic and activist resource into Japanese feminist organizing. In the case of Cheiron McMahill's friendship with Mari Furukawa, a former member of the feminist group "Joki," for example, they abandoned the

language exchanges after just a few months in 1985, but have continued to be involved in each other's feminist-related activities.

In this light, feminist academic Barbara Summerhawk points to the need to get out of the ESL classroom for a while and look at how feminist ideas are diffused through cultural exchanges, in which English may or may not be the medium. While language acquisition is often sought by a small minority of relatively privileged Japanese feminists, she underscores the importance of linking up with the vast numbers of other grassroots groups which want cultural exchange but can't expect their members to function in English. Thus, the study of language may not always emerge as the most effective context in which to create transcultural feminist bonds.

Peer Language Exchange with a Facilitator

Peer language exchange with a facilitator usually takes place in the context of organized women's events, such as the twice-yearly Womyn's Weekends around the Kanto region, or as a prelude to bilingual women's groups' meetings, such as those held by the International Feminists of Japan. A bilingual facilitator is assigned to prepare a lesson plan which is then followed by mixed English/Japanese pairs or triads. The facilitator offers assistance, paces the students, and brings the group back together for sharing. At language exchanges facilitated by McMahill at Womyn's Weekends in 1994 and 1995, for instance, participants were asked to divide themselves into three levels of proficiency in their second language, and then put into pairs or triads to work on bilingual questionnaires, role-plays, and translation assignments. Topics included "a visit to the gynecologist," "defending yourself," and "women's music." As attendance in facilitated peer language exchange cannot be ascertained from meeting to meeting or from weekend to weekend, such exchanges are generally planned as once-only exercises.

In this setting, at least part of the control over lesson content is shifted away from the learners and into the hands of one person. Inevitably, with this loss of responsibility often comes somewhat lessened interest and commitment, as the ideas don't necessarily originate from the participants' own experiences. This challenge could be overcome if the facilitator identified issues of interest to participants at one such gathering for use at the following event. Unfortunately, though, the facilitator may lack the motivation to do this since she is not remunerated, and attendance is often unstable.

This form of study incorporates many of the benefits of peer tutoring, however, and the involvement of a facilitator is often helpful as it disciplines the language partners to follow through on their respective commitments to attend. As with peer tutoring, perhaps this method's greatest benefit is its reciprocal nature. Thus, both women are "rewarded" for

the sense of vulnerability they may feel when in the student's chair by also having the chance to use their area of expertise in teaching their own language⁴.

Small Language Study Groups

These study groups usually consist of a few students and a hired or volunteer teacher who tackle issues of a feminist nature defined by the students as being relevant to them. In most cases, a group chooses a representative to select a suitable teacher, and that woman coordinates the time and content needs of the students with the schedule and resources of the instructor.

One such study group in Tokyo is an English class initially proposed by members of the feminist organization "Agora." While the members have changed over time, the group is unusual in that it has continued for over fifteen years. A key reason for this group's longevity seems to be that the learners have been well-matched in language ability. Their high written and oral proficiency has allowed them to actively take part in selecting, reading, and discussing authentic materials. A cohesive core group, whose responsibility it has been to hire instructors, find meeting spaces, and admit new members, has apparently felt comfortable sharing the responsibility for their own learning situation over an extended period of time, while the instructor's role has been negotiated as that of co-participant, facilitator, and English resource. According to Summerhawk, a former instructor of the group, the members' immediate professional and political needs for English skills have helped set the tone of the class, with one woman later becoming a translator, and another establishing a feminist press.

However, even stable, long-lasting groups cannot escape criticism. Even though stability has been an important ingredient in this group's progress, Emiko Terazawa, a participant in the class for eleven years, notes the stagnation that this brings with it: "(The class) has become a mere salon for relatively wealthy middle-aged women... Continuity is of course important, but groups are often apt to be rigid."

The Women's English Class, which ran for two years beginning in 1993, provides a more volatile sample of a small study group. While the content in this class appeared to match the learners' needs and interests, and most shared a common background as activists,

⁴ It would be interesting to try to establish this kind of language exchange class between foreign and Japanese feminists on an on-going basis, with compensation for the facilitator's efforts being arranged by the participants and a system of prior commitment ensuring that equal numbers of English- and Japanese-speakers attend.

the group faced several structural problems. For one, participants leaned too heavily on the coordinator to organize the class, a job which they had intended to rotate. As others were reluctant to share in the duties, however, much of the burden fell on one woman, who could then not focus effectively on her own needs as a learner. This apathy, according to Gwen Riles, one instructor for the group, also translated into the students' unwillingness to get involved in either the planning of the course content or in any social action based on the group's reflection on any given day's topic. Hwa Mi Park, the coordinator, further points to the differing English abilities within the class as a factor which limited the participation of lower-level students and inhibited the progress of advanced students. Finally, one last challenge facing the class was the friction that developed among some participants, especially threatening to group cohesion in such a small, member-directed class, according to Park. Because long-term solutions to the above problems with the class were ultimately never found, the class was discontinued, apparently with some regret.

Other small feminist English classes have taken place within fixed time frames and with particular goals. One such group was named Feminist English for Beijing, in preparation for the United Nations conference of September 1995, and organized under the auspices of the AWRC. The participants emerged from varied backgrounds and included university professors, lawyers, and politicians, as well as activists, working women, and housewives. It was also a diverse group in terms of familiarity with and commitment to feminist ideas. It is clear that in this situation, a common sense of purpose acted as the glue holding together these diverse elements. The course was short and intensive, so they threw themselves into it, leading instructor Debbie Lunny to comment that although she would not expect to recreate the same kind of intense commitment or interest again, it was one of her most positive teaching experiences.

Our final example of a small study group differs from the others in that it was organized for the purpose of Western women studying Japanese women's literature. The group was taught by poet, artist, and college instructor Mieko Watanabe, and comprised just three members who were well-matched in interests and language level. While these students deeply wished to engage in literary criticism with others in Japanese, they feared being marginalized as "foreigners" in a formal university setting. The group thus provided them a chance to gain confidence in their "right to speak" and develop a new bicultural identity as feminist academics⁵. The group decided, with the advice of the instructor, what reading materials to use, and how many pages to tackle at a time. Students came with questions on kanji, vocabulary, and grammar, and the instructor explained historical and literary

⁵This is similar to the process Peirce(1995) observes in immigrant women to the United States.

background to the works. That Watanabe was also available to act as a consultant and collaborator for related translation projects further empowered the students by supporting them in their academic work outside the classroom. Although this group was a cohesive and satisfactory one, it did not continue more than a year because of key members leaving Japan.

Based on the above examples of small group language classes, then, a successful experience appears to be contingent upon the learners having either a common history of activism together, or a common motivating purpose for learning the language. Perhaps it is this unity in background or purpose, too, which can foster an environment in which learners gain the confidence needed to equitably share in the logistics and teaching of the classes, a key attribute in classes which have succeeded over time. Despite the existence of the various problems outlined above, both instructors and students are often highly motivated to participate in small group lessons, and sometimes continue for years, despite the problems and extra work involved and the lack of official recognition (degrees or certificates) for their efforts. The classes given as examples here are just a few that were immediately easy for us to document out of many that have existed in the Tokyo area over the past fifteen years.

Feminist Language Schools

Small, private language schools represent yet another setting in which feminist language learning takes place. These differ from the others in that here, feminist language education enters the realm of commercial (albeit small-scale), managed educational ventures. It could be argued that such a setting offers learners less potential for self-actualization, as their control over the learning experience must necessarily be restricted. However, in relieving learners of the logistical and pedagogical responsibilities which can so often become burdensome in other settings, a manager may also appear as a blessing to some. In addition, by virtue of being open to the public (including men), such a school has the potential to disseminate feminist ideas to a larger audience, which may also have significant benefits.

"English Conversation Terakoya for the Discussion of Environmental Issues and Feminism" refers to seven courses which have been operating in Tokyo since 1993. Here, manager Mikiko Ishihara is working to redefine both the role of the manager of learning and of the non-native speaking or bilingual teacher within feminist language education. Ishihara's classes deal with environmental issues as well as feminism, taking a "global education" rather than a strictly feminist approach. She often steers her students into difficult, radical feminist issues via an examination of the environment and social justice. English study itself is a pathway to feminism for many women, according to Ishihara, who proposes that it may be less threatening for many Japanese women to accept feminist ideas

initially as part of a larger study of Western culture than as perspectives also applicable or even indigenous to Japan. Furthermore, when speaking Japanese, she speculates, women feel bound by the cultural rules inherent in the language, and so conversely speaking in English is perceived as liberating, and conducive to critical/feminist thinking.

Ishihara is involved at all levels of her school, from management to lesson-planning to classroom involvement. She teaches all the beginners' classes, and hires native English-speaking feminists to teach the others. However even in these classes she is present in the role of "lead student." Ishihara describes Japanese students in general as passive and cautious learners, and thus one of her key roles is that of a model for active and uninhibited engagement in the learning process. In an effort to democratize existing power hierarchies, she encourages students to call the teacher by their first name plus "san" rather than by the formal title "sensei," and to look upon the native English speaker as a resource and co-participant rather than an authority. Students may or may not be involved in various sorts of political activism, including feminism, although they tend to be; the only requirement is that they are interested. In reality, about one third of the students already define themselves as feminists when they start the class.

Unique to this situation is the fact that Ishihara herself, as a Japanese woman and non-native speaker of English, shares the same characteristics as most of her students. Auerbach (1993) argues that at least in the case of teachers of ESL to immigrants to the U.S., these qualifications are at least as valuable as being a native speaker or having specialized training as an instructor, as language and teaching skills can be instilled through training whereas shared cultural experience cannot. Auerbach further cites numerous studies that have shown how when instructors share their students' native language and cultural assumptions about learning, they can improve the effectiveness of instruction and increase student participation. Linda White's experience teaching two short courses in 1995 for Ishihara that were tailored to the NGO Forum of the Fourth World Conference on Women would seem to confirm this. White found Ishihara's role as a bilingual co-instructor to be a very positive influence, and was struck by how her presence provided a bridge between White's own and the students' English, as well as a model for competent use of English as a second language.

The Koto International Japanese Language School is another small-scale enterprise, which was opened in 1988 by Japanese feminists, and currently has twenty students enrolled in three levels of an intensive program. Most of the students are currently from China, are split almost equally between men and women, and receive visa sponsorship from the school. The school does not and cannot explicitly advertize itself as a feminist language school if it is to survive commercially. Nevertheless, coordinator Hiroko Kawabe asserts that besides the instructors being feminists and trying to incorporate feminist issues into their classes, their

school is different from regular private language institutions in that they also offer students counselling on personal problems, and when appropriate, steer them in the direction of women's support groups and hotlines. The instructors all try to avoid the use of commercially available textbooks that use sexist language. They try also to use authentic materials at the pre-intermediate and intermediate levels that deal with issues relevant to women and/or Asians in Japan. Kawabe offers as an example the school's use of articles on the problems of Asian brides in Japan.

The Potential of Feminist Language Education to Empower Learners

Whether women choose to engage in peer tutoring, language exchanges with a facilitator, small study groups, or language schools, there appears to be a multiplicity of perceived benefits motivating them to choose grassroots feminist language education over more traditional methods. Together, these motivations reflect the potential of this kind of education not only to transform the learning/teaching process itself, but also to significantly empower women in the broader context of their lives.

One such motivation emerges from the fact that participation, with the exception of the two schools, is limited to women. Although a minority contend that the presence of men would be beneficial as they would contribute a different perspective, in fact the number of men eager to join these classes is negligible. Most women respondents concur that women-only groups were superior, as they perceived women's discourse style as distinct⁶. In addition to men's presence in class causing a distraction, one informant also points to her belief that women generally feel uncomfortable discussing certain sensitive issues--especially those dealing with the body, sex, and violence--in the presence of men. Conversely, all-women settings allow for certain basic assumptions, right or wrong, of a common female experiential base.

Additionally, the practical application of issues to one's own life and work as a feminist made possible through grassroots feminist education is typically not available through formal university or regular private language school channels. Here, content-based language teaching, in which language becomes a medium with which to study a particular content or context (Mohan, 1986) converges with feminist pedagogy and its emphasis on gaining skills for political work (Weiler, 1994). Park notes that in feminist English classes,

⁶Both personal experience and studies of the frequency with which men interrupt women and the monopolization of conversations by men, such as the observations popularized by Tannen (1994), are cited as the bases for this belief.

"there is no conflict between the language I want to learn and the content I want to study." Recent examples include the feminist English classes in preparation for the 1995 UN Conference on Women in Beijing.

Another motivation for learners to create their own feminist language classes involves ideological and social cohesion among the participants themselves. Participants are usually all women involved in feminist activism or discourse of some kind, with a common interest in combining feminism and language study. In the best cases, they are friends and comrades-in-arms with a long history, and language study is an extension of their community together. Being surrounded by a supportive group may yield important affective results for language acquisition. Park touches on this point in her reflection that "although one unfortunate result of having so much in common is that disagreement and debate can be limited, still it is very helpful for feminist women to first be able to practice articulating their opinions in a supportive setting" before trying to use a second language in an international and mixed-gender situation.

Finally, traditional power relations between teachers and students are largely broken down and redefined through grassroots feminist language education, even when an instructor is officially contracted to teach a small group. One reason for this is that feminist pedagogy, with its roots in leaderless consciousness-raising groups and collectives, has emphasized egalitarian relationships between students and teachers and experience and feeling as legitimate sources of knowledge (Weiler, 1994). Feminists' concern for each other thus often leads to closer personal ties than those which would normally be possible in traditional student-teacher, or student-student relationships. While the examples abound, women mention helping each other obtain everything from divorces to abortions to counselling, as extensions of the relationships formed in language class.

It is likewise true that those in the students' role are in many cases the leaders, achievers, and philosophers of the various feminist groups in Tokyo, and as such have much to offer their instructors, both in terms of academic expertise and knowledge of the women's movement in their particular cultural context. Because of this, those in the instructors' role often agree that they are gaining as much or more than the students by teaching feminist language classes. This may be particularly true for non-Japanese women, in their initial status as outsiders, in terms of personal contacts and initiation into the Japanese feminist community. Summerhawk's experiences teaching at Agora, for example, have led among other things to her team-teaching a course on women's studies in Japanese at the university level and authoring an EFL/women's studies textbook (Summerhawk, 1994). These benefits can extend to Japan-born women as well--Watanabe cites the questions posed by her foreign students about Japanese women's literature as having helped her greatly in her teaching of comparative cultures at a Japanese university and indirectly leading to many

translation projects done in collaboration with foreign feminists that have contributed to her understanding of feminism as a world-wide struggle. "Overall," adds Lunny, "the combination of what I've gotten out of both class time and my relationships with students has absolutely altered my understanding of what feminism is, means and can mean."

Furthermore, feminist language education at the grassroots level allows for an atmosphere in which learners can be frank with their instructors about their reasons for engaging in language learning. For example, Japanese women often assert openly that although they need the English language, that does not necessarily mean a wholesale adoption of Western culture. In one instance, Summerhawk was informed by her students at the beginning of her work at Agora that "We have no desire to emulate the example of Western feminist women, so please don't come at us from that perspective. We identify with and want to work with other Asian women." Beginning the Women's English Club also had in fact been mainly motivated by the coordinator's attendance at the World Human Rights Convention in Vienna in June, 1993. At the convention, many activists from around the world had grudgingly accepted that English was necessary for their international work. Park recalls, "(We became) painfully aware of the need to use English as a weapon to express our demands and activities to other women in the world, because of the reality of English being used as a common language of communication on the NGO level in international settings, whether we like it or not." A key component of feminist language education, therefore, must be a struggle against Western cultural imperialism and a sensitivity to the wide spectrum of responses to English as the instrument largely responsible for the spread of that hegemonic culture.

Conclusions and Recommendations

Two main lessons can be drawn from this examination of feminist language education. One is a lesson for those of us actually engaged in it: that such grassroots education is most effective when both commitment levels and language needs of participants are well-matched. Gwen Riles notes, "I am very concerned with the cycle I see in feminist and other kinds of grassroots political organizing whereby a few people work very hard to make things happen, people get interested and join up because of the activities and good energy, the organizers burn out, and the group falls apart. It seems to me there must be ways of having every participant feel ownership in the group and in the process, so that it moves organically as opposed to moving like a string of ducklings tagging after mother duck."

Throughout this paper, feminist language education has emerged as attractive in its potential to empower learners, yet problematic in its imposition of extra burdens on the

students. To create a new model takes extra effort and a willingness to make mistakes. The participatory approach puts a heavy burden on practitioners, demanding a level of critical inquiry, creativity, and productivity that is beyond that required with a text-based or predetermined curriculum (Auerbach, 1995, p. 29). Here are at least a few preliminary suggestions to those starting up a feminist language class.

The roles of the participants, and if and how these will be shared, rotated, recognized and compensated, need to be identified and agreed to at the beginning of the class and on an ongoing basis as the need arises. Participants should be cautious about making assumptions based on their prior learning experiences, especially when they are coming from different linguistic, cultural, political and professional perspectives. The feminist language classrooms studied in this paper alone reveal two crucial new roles for participants, including manager and bilingual co-facilitator, in addition to the traditional roles of student and teacher. Scheduling, securing facilities, setting requirements for attendance and homework, collection and payment of fees, recruitment of students and instructors, determining any prerequisite language proficiency or feminist knowledge, finding materials and making lesson plans, negotiating class goals, topics, format and teaching approach--these are just a few of the duties that participants can and must creatively and fairly redistribute when forming their own classes.

The other lesson is for language educators in general. There is much interest recently in "empowerment" and "student-centered" teaching. But power is something seized from below, and not doled out from above. This is not to deny the usefulness of women's studies, global education, or classes on language and gender issues within formal educational institutions in introducing a wide spectrum of people to new ideas. However, the potential for students to become significantly empowered, and for traditional teacher /student power relations to be eroded from within that structure have also been called into question. Tollefson, for example, notes the "double bind" into which students are put when their instructor orders them to take power within an institution in which they do not have structural equality (see Tollefson, 1991, pp. 97-101). Feminist college instructors must also struggle with conflicts between their egalitarian ideals and their authority within the institutionalized university system (Weiler, 1994). Working in cooperation with learners to develop language classes on a grassroots level can, on the other hand, give instructors the opportunity to more directly experience true student-directed learning and teaching for social change. This is because the instructor works within structures controlled by the learners. Implicit in this is at least a partial relinquishment of the educator's role as an expert or depositor of knowledge.

We hope that this paper will help those engaged in feminist language education to see the significance of what we are doing in a larger context, learning from each other's

successes and struggles in creating alternatives to the traditional language classroom. We also hope that this paper will inspire more language teachers to work for social change and the empowerment of learners through grassroots language education.

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TRANSFORMING TEACHING: STRATEGIES FOR ENGAGING FEMALE LEARNERS

Kumiko Fujimura-Fanselow

Look at a classroom: look at the many kinds of women's faces, postures, expressions. Listen to the women's voices. Listen to the silences, the unasked questions, the blanks. Listen to the small, soft voices, often courageously trying to speak up, voices of women taught early that tones of confidence, challenge, anger, or assertiveness, are strident and unfeminine. Listen to the voices of the women and the voices of men; observe the space men allow themselves, physically and verbally, the male assumption that people will listen, even when the majority of the group is female. Look at the faces of the silent, and of those who speak. Listen to a woman groping for language in which to express what is on her mind, sensing that the terms of academic discourse are not her language, trying to cut down her thought to the dimensions of a discourse not intended for her (*for it is not fitting that a woman speak in public*); or reading her paper aloud at breakneck speed, throwing her words away, deprecating her own work by a reflex prejudice: *I do not deserve to take up time and space.* (Rich, 1978, pp. 243-4)

Introduction

These words were spoken by poet, essayist and educator Adrienne Rich before an audience of teachers of women in a talk given for the New Jersey College and University Coalition on Women's Education. Rich might have just as well, though, been describing many of the young Japanese girls and women we come into contact with in our various courses. Some of us who have been frustrated in our efforts to get our Japanese female students to speak up or express their opinions in class--whether it be in an English or some other course) may be surprised by the revelation that this type of behavior is not inherent or unique to the Japanese educational setting or to Japanese females.

I want to emphasize the point that I think it is very important that teachers, particularly the non-Japanese, not succumb to what might be termed "uniqueness-of-culture" explanations or interpretations of "Japanese behavior," in this case, silence, diffidence, lack of assertiveness, and so on, on the part of Japanese females. Such an explanation goes something like this: "Japanese females act in certain ways because they are shy and reserved, and the reason they are shy and reserved is because those are the qualities considered to be desirable in Japanese culture and females have internalized those cultural values." This implies that culture is a monolithic entity that is shared and embraced by all members of a society, rather than "a terrain of struggle" (Brock-Utne, 1995, p. 488-9) and ignores the element of power relations within any culture.

An explanation incorporating this political/power perspective would point to the fact that historically, in most societies, women have had unequal access to power and have, as a result,

been silenced, and forced to defer to males, especially in the public domain. Modern institutions of formal education, from grade school on to university, moreover, have functioned, in part, as instruments for reinforcing and reproducing sexism, gender stereotyping, and gender inequality in power relations through the kinds of knowledge and skills, as well as values, norms, and expectations transmitted and inculcated both through the formal curriculum (which often is gender-differentiated) and non-formal (or "hidden") curriculum. A related point that is worth interjecting here, I think, is that ironically, many of us who teach in academic institutions, but especially women who are more likely to be found in the lower ranks in the formal hierarchies of power, security, status, and income and thus are most vulnerable to harassment, often find ourselves silenced and placed in the position of deferring to those (mostly males) who hold authority, in the same way that female students find themselves silenced in the classroom. It is in this sense that I find the title of an article authored by Louise Johnson (1987), "Is Academic Feminism an Oxymoron?" so clever and provocative!

The kinds of attitudes and behaviors female students often exhibit in the classroom, while they may reflect certain dominant social/cultural values, norms, and expectations regarding girls and women--which, I would emphasize, females themselves may or may not have internalized, either in part or whole--are also a product of the socialization and educational process, that is, the ways in which educational institutions are structured and the kinds of teaching/learning processes they have been exposed to and come to expect in the classroom. This implies, in turn, that hesitancy in acting or speaking, shyness, and the like, are to a large degree learned behaviors and therefore they can be altered through modifying not only the content of education, that is, the kinds of knowledge presented in the classroom, but also teaching styles and practices, the structure of classroom relationships, and modes of classroom interaction.

As a feminist teacher (which is how I choose to define myself) and a teacher of women's studies, one of my goals is to empower individual women, that is to say, enable them to acquire the competence, knowledge, confidence, and skills required for them to critique existing practices and institutions and to strive for personal growth unimpeded by gender-based stereotypes and prejudices. This involves having students gain knowledge of themselves as individual women, the history and accomplishments of women, and the origins of women's oppression, etc. Such knowledge would, in turn, awaken a sense of responsibility and obligation to women as a social group and lead them to take action in cooperation with other women to develop strategies for bringing about social change and the liberation of women. Feminist educators in the United States, Great Britain, Australia, and elsewhere, have increasingly come to recognize that the realization of these goals necessitates not simply offering content that is different from that of most traditional disciplines but also engaging in teaching-learning practices based on principles such as cooperation, equality, recognition and valuation of diversity, the fostering of critical thinking, and validation of personal experience and emotion

as sources of knowledge and understanding--values and principles which are at odds with those that govern academic structures--hierarchy, authority, and emphasis on control, conformity, passivity, competition, and so-called objectivity. It is in this sense that the ultimate goal and function of feminist educators must be seen as none other than one of transforming educational structures and practices, and undermining academic feminism as an oxymoron.

Referring back to the kinds of behavior described above by Rich, we need to recognize that much of that behavior is the result of what students have learned in the process of being in the classroom and of how they have been taught. Very often we teachers have--unwittingly perhaps--reinforced such behavior through our teaching. Therefore, if we want our female students to assume a different set of attitudes about themselves and to behave in ways that will enhance their personal growth and competence, we have to adopt different attitudes about our role and function as teachers and alter our behaviors accordingly.

Changing the Way We Teach As Well As What We Teach

As is so often the case, though, while the goal may be apparent, the means by which this goal is to be achieved are often less so. At the beginning of each semester that I have taught my introductory course in women's studies to Japanese female undergraduates over the last seven years--and indeed at the beginning of every course I have taught--I have explained to the students how this relatively new discipline called women's studies differs from most traditional disciplines not only in terms of the content it deals with but also in terms of the process by which this content is taught. Time and time again, I have exhorted students to take greater responsibility for their learning and that of their classmates by speaking up, raising questions and doubts, and expressing alternative viewpoints.. If I did not realize initially the limitations of exhorting, prodding, and even pleading as means of getting students (or anyone else) to change their behavior, I certainly am much more aware now.

What I have attempted to do over recent years is to focus more on structuring my classes in such ways that active student participation and input is built into and made an integral and necessary component of the classroom teaching and learning process. In the discussion that follows, I would like to describe some concrete ways in which I have sought to realize that objective, as well as other related goals, namely, diffusing power, which tends to be concentrated in the hands of the instructor, and having learners exercise greater initiative in the classroom, having students assume responsibility for their own learning and that of their classmates, reducing student dependence on the teacher as a source of knowledge, and at the same time fostering independent thinking and reliance on their own power of creative and critical thinking and analysis--in what I have designated as three phases in the teaching process--planning (of a course or a particular class), execution (i.e., actual day-to-day

teaching), and assessment or evaluation of students. At the same time, I will talk about some of the problems I have encountered in terms of reluctance and/or lack of ability on the part of students to readily take on the role I was anticipating them to play, as well as in terms of monitoring my own behavior so that my words and actions would be consistent and congruent with the goals and principles I was seeking to promote and put into practice. I will be basing my discussion for the most part on my experiences in teaching an introductory course in women's studies to first-year undergraduate students at a women's college. I conduct the classes partly in English; in addition about half of the readings are in English, and I have students write their assignments either partly or wholly in English.

Incorporating Student Input in the Phase of Course Planning and Design

If we really believe that classroom learning is a joint endeavor which requires the cooperation, input, and active participation of the main players, that is, the students, and we want students to realize this, then I think we need to incorporate these elements from the very beginning--in designing and planning a course. One of the reasons why students so often seem to be disinterested in what is presented to them in class has to do, I believe, with the fact that the material does not hold personal meaning for them. I have found this to be the case in my course on women's studies. I used to assume, "Surely these young women would be interested in issues concerning women," but then I quickly discovered that the majority of them--18- and 19-year-olds--with their limited life experience, particularly firsthand experience of discrimination based on their sex as well as exposure to gender issues in their previous schooling, did not regard women's issues as something that directly concerned them.

Most of the female students I have in my classes, though they have had quite a bit of practice listening and memorizing whatever material is presented to them, have done so without investing themselves personally in what they are supposedly learning--either because they could not connect what they were studying to some personal concern or interest or because they could not understand what was being presented to them--or both. Usually students have little direct input in the planning and designing of courses they take, either in terms of the content or process.

Up through the high school level, Japanese teachers are required to more or less uniformly follow the curriculum prescribed for each grade level by the Ministry of Education and set forth in a document called *Gakushu shido yoryo* (Course of Study). There has been much criticism over the fact that the curriculum has become increasingly accelerated over the course of the last 40 years since the Course of Study was first issued, with the result that teachers are forced to move quickly through the material to be covered, often relying on top-down method of instruction, and without being able to respond to the diverse needs and

interests of their students. The difficulties and frustrations experienced by those students who cannot keep up with this pace of instruction and whose needs are not met by such methods of instruction account in large part for the growing incidence of students who fall behind in their studies (so-called *ochikobore*), as well as those exhibiting *toko kyohi* (refusal to go to school or school phobia), and those who drop out of high school.

Instructors at the college and university level, on the other hand, have almost total autonomy in terms of designing and teaching courses; and yet, it is generally taken for granted that the instructor is the one who determines the content to be taken up in a course and how the content will be dealt with, and students are placed in the position of passively going along. In recent years, the preparation of course syllabuses (*kogi yoko or rishu yoko*) has become widely discussed as a panacea for improving the quality of Japanese university-level teaching. Of course, a syllabus can be very useful and important in terms of giving students (including those contemplating enrolling in a course) basic information about the course--such as the purpose or objective of the course, themes or topics to be taken up in the course, list of required and optional reading material, and basis for grading. At the same time, though, there are some drawbacks connected with having instructors construct a syllabus for a course prior to meeting their students face-to-face.

Each class is likely to differ from every other class in some ways since each is made up of a unique collection of individual students who may differ in terms of age, prior experiences, etc., as well as in terms of interests, motivations for taking a particular course, degree of knowledge about the field. Consequently, the topics the teacher has chosen to deal with and the sequencing and pacing of learning the teacher has in mind, may not be suited to a particular group of students, or to most of the students in a group. In such a case I think the task of overcoming student silence and passivity is likely to be all the more difficult. To give an example, in my introductory course on women's studies I have discovered that some of the topics I have students read about and discuss (sexual harassment in the workplace, divorce, problems facing women re-entering the job market, etc.) evoke a high level of interest among the dozen or so mature women students (*shakaijin gakusei*) who enter each year and bring with them experiences gained in the home, the workplace, and community, but fail to arouse interest among the younger students. One of the ways to deal with this kind of problem, I suggest, is to have students participate in the process of determining the agenda for a course.

In the very first meeting of the course I ask the students to formulate both individually and as a group what they would like to learn in/from the course and why. In addition I try to discover what kinds of preconceptions or expectations students have about the course, in this case, women's studies, and their level of familiarity and knowledge with the field and the topics and issues it encompasses by having each student write down what they expect to learn in the women's studies course and to indicate whether they had ever take a course in high school that

dealt with women's studies or with some issues related to women, and if so, the topics they studied. The information gotten by asking these questions gives me some idea of what the students are interested in and their level of knowledge about the field. After going through these steps, I talk about what women's studies is all about and try to dispel some of their misconceptions and prejudices about the field, and I explain my goals for the course and the expectations I have of the students. Although I prepare a course syllabus, I regard it as tentative and negotiable.

The course runs for just one semester, so that the class meets roughly 16 times. I decide on the agenda for 9 or 10 of the class sessions and leave blanks next to the other dates. In the first session I ask students for feedback on the topics I have selected and at the same time have them propose some topics they would like to see taken up in two of the remaining classes. At times I have found it necessary to explain the rationale for taking up a particular topic that students claim they have little interest in, such as the issue of job opportunities for middle-aged women; other times I have substituted a topic suggested by a student for one I had planned on taking up. I feel that the product that evolves out of this kind of process of negotiation and compromise among the students and instructor is likely to more congruent with the student's interests and concerns and level of sophistication as far as their awareness and knowledge of a particular area is concerned. At the same time, having taken part in developing the syllabus, students may perceive what they are learning less as something that is being imposed on them and more as something in which they have some stake--an investment in which they have put in something of themselves, and thereby show more active involvement.

The four or five remaining sessions--which are sprinkled throughout the latter two-thirds of the semester, I set aside for oral presentations by students. I have students in groups of three to five undertake mini-research on some topic they choose related to women and let them decide the format in which they wish to present their findings--oral presentations (coupled with the use of the chalkboard, an OHP, handouts, etc., or a debate format), posters, short videos, etc. (If I have more than 60 students in a class, I include the option of presenting a written report, mainly because I find there is not enough time for everyone to given an oral report.) I usually schedule four presentations for each of the four or five remaining sessions.

Teachers commonly schedule student oral reports at the end of the course, a practice I used to follow; what I have in mind here, however, is to structure the course in such a way that student research is an integral part of the course work itself, rather than an adjunct. The students, in essence, take responsibility for planning and "teaching" a part of the course; they decide what they want to teach and how to teach it. How well they succeed in this task will be judged not so much by the instructor but rather their classmates, who will give feedback through questions and comments.

One of my primary goals here is to lessen student dependence on the teacher as the source

of knowledge and classroom learning, to have them realize that the teacher need not (and indeed cannot) be the sole provider of such knowledge, but that rather, the role of "teacher" and "learner" can be assumed by different members of the class at different times. The groups giving their presentations in the earlier part of the course have much less time in which to do their research and prepare their presentation, but what I try to explain to students is that what they present is not expected to be polished products, and that the main purpose is to gain experience in working with others in a group to investigate a topic and devise ways to present their findings so that they can be readily understood and appreciated by their peers. After each group makes its presentations I elicit reactions and comments as well as suggestions for possible improvement from the group members and also the audience, and what I have found is that those suggestions are incorporated in some way in each of the successive group presentations. Time and again, in student course evaluations these group presentations are cited by many as the most informative and enjoyable as well as most beneficial to their learning: "I realized one learns most from studying and investigating something on one's own."

To summarize, if we are to put into practice the notion that learning is a joint venture in which students and teachers alike, on the one hand, must assume responsibility, and on the other hand, have the right to exercise initiative and choice, it is essential, I think, that we allow for student input right from the start, in the phase of designing and planning a course. To be sure, few teachers rigidly adhere to a predetermined syllabus; most no doubt make necessary on-the-spot modifications in the process of actual teaching in response to feedback and reactions from students. While this is certainly important and necessary, what I am suggesting is that this kind of practice be made an integral component of the process by which we determine the content of a course. I am suggesting in addition that we rewrite the usual script which calls for the teacher to be on stage the majority of the time, and provide more stage time to our students, giving them the opportunity to assume the main role, as teacher.

Incorporating Student Input in the Phase of Actual Teaching

I assume that most readers, whatever subjects they might teach, have spent considerable time thinking about ways to foster such values as autonomy, independence, and critical thinking on the part of their Japanese students and allow for more student initiative and input in the course of their day-to-day teaching. In this section, I want to talk about some of the problems I have encountered in terms of dealing with the reticence we so often encounter among female students particularly and trying to get them to assume a more participatory role in the classroom and also suggest some concrete steps for working toward changing those behaviors. Here again, I want to stress the fact that it is not enough to simply encourage or pressures students to change; rather, it is up to the instructor to do adopt the kinds of pedagogical styles and to create

the kind of classroom environment (including physical environment) in which active student-to-student and teacher-to-student interaction and participation by everyone in the learning process is a built-in component of everyday classroom activities.

When I have asked students to reflect on why they think most students appear reluctant to speak up in class, they have pointed out that throughout much of their past schooling, especially from secondary school on, they have been accustomed to mostly listening to what the teacher lectures, taking down what the teacher said or wrote on the board. It seems teachers commonly call on students to respond in turn; if a student doesn't know the answer they go on to the next student or else provide the answer themselves. Most students felt they were rarely encouraged or called upon to initiate questions, comments, or personal opinions. Although there were many exceptions, they felt that on the whole there were several factors working against such attempts, most notably, the pressure on teachers to get through the textbook and cover the prescribed curriculum for each grade that I noted earlier, and the entrance examinations for upper secondary school and later university which tend to focus on testing knowledge of facts.

As my students also recognized, the very size of classes (prescribed at a maximum of 40 pupils in elementary and lower secondary school and 45 in upper secondary schools) and the physical setup of most classrooms--students sitting in rows at individual desks facing the teacher and the chalkboard at the front of the room inhibit discussions and face-to-face interactions among students. Classes at the college level often consist of hundreds of students; moreover unlike at many American universities, for example, where lectures in an introductory course are supplemented by smaller discussion groups, once-a-week lectures are all that students in Japanese universities attend. The introductory course in women's studies that I teach consists of between 50 and 100 students each semester, and the classrooms are all set up so that the students sit in straight rows of seats that are fixed to the floor, facing the front of the room and the chalkboard with the teacher's desk and microphone on a platform. The physical setup itself puts teacher and students on different levels and in different roles. Many students, understandably, feel uncomfortable speaking up in a large class where they cannot even see the faces of the other students.

Another set of factors that I think functions to inhibit students from engaging in the kind of active learning that is such an important part of learning women's studies has to do with the kinds of expectations of teacher authority and classroom behavior that students have absorbed in the process of schooling. Some students have pointed out they feel reluctant to voice disagreement with something the teacher has said, since, after all, the teacher is supposedly the authority in her field. The pressure to defer to those in positions of authority and to refrain from asking questions or speaking up, seems not surprisingly to be felt more strongly by girls and young women, particularly in a coeducational environment where they may be subjected to sexual harassment, although Japanese research in this area is, as yet, very limited. Several of

my students have related experiences of having been told by male classmates in high school, "You're impertinent to ask questions even though you're a girl!" Others have related incidents in which attempts to get professors to explain something presented in lectures were met by comments that belittled their intellectual abilities, such as, "Even if I tried to explain it to you, you probably wouldn't understand because it's so difficult."

Finally, I think the emphasis on group cooperation and harmony so often stressed in schools, though they may have some positive aspects, can operate as a form of pressure on individuals to remain silent, go along, avoid standing out, and to suppress personal views, feelings, and opinions, especially when they differ from those of the majority in a group. The following comments illustrate some of these points:

Why is it that even though many young women have good ideas they rarely take the initiative of raising their hands and expressing those ideas in class? In my own experience, up through high school hardly any of the students spoke up in class. I think we were afraid of saying something that was out of place or that wasn't quite what the teacher had in mind or the answer the teacher was looking for. And we sensed our role was to listen passively and obediently follow as the teacher conducted class. . . .
(A third-year undergraduate in a course on women and education)

We have been taught that there is only one answer or solution to every problem or issue and that all other ideas are wrong. My experience has been that even if we have an opinion and can state our reasons for holding the opinion, it isn't considered to be of any importance if the teacher says it's wrong. And so we try to find the answer that the teacher believes to be correct. . . .
(An older returning undergraduate student in the introductory course in women's studies.)

In order to get students, particularly first-year students who are being introduced to women's studies, to put aside their usual expectations about the respective roles of teacher and student in the classroom and to assume a different set of attitudes and behaviors requires a restructuring of classroom relationships and patterns of interaction. One of the steps which I have taken in the introductory course in women's studies where I have up to one hundred students in a class, is to drastically reduce the time spent in lecturing to the entire class. I instead focus on having having students engage in various types of small group activities. In a classroom such as the one in which I teach the introductory women's studies class I simply have students in one row turn around and face those behind them; in smaller classrooms with movable chairs I have students sit in circles. I think the groups must be small enough so that students can look at one another, learn one another's names easily and feel comfortable talking with one another or sharing what they have written with one another, disagreeing with one another, or talking about personal experiences.

Group or pair work takes place in several forms, such as reading and writing comments on one another's written work, discussing points presented in a lecture or reading assignment,

comparing reactions to videos shown in class, and sharing personal experiences related to readings or discussion topics. As the students work in their groups I sometimes go around and sit with them for a few minutes, once in a while asking a question or making a comment, but for the most part simply listening and observing. Often, the very presence of the teacher silences students because they feel they are being judged by someone who supposedly knows more than they do. This is reflected in one student's comment: "The teacher's comments have great influence on students' thinking. Working in groups without the teacher, students can think more freely."

Within the groups, I have students volunteer or choose members to assume different responsibilities, for example, making sure every group member gets an opportunity to be heard (rather than allowing certain members to dominate discussions), recording significant points brought up in the course of discussion, and making sure the discussion does not take off too much on a tangent. After students have had a chance to carry on discussions in small groups I sometimes have members from each group present some of the ideas that were brought up to the entire class.

Having students participate in group discussions is one means of implementing the goal of getting students to regard themselves as active participants in the production of knowledge in the classroom rather than as passive recipients. Another way, which I have found to be very beneficial, is through having students share their written work with others. Whenever I give students written assignments I have them exchange their papers with one another and write comments on "Post-Its." At times I have individual students read aloud their papers before the entire group, after making sure they feel comfortable doing so; or I type excerpts from student writings on a particular topic and distribute them for everyone to read. In these ways we can elevate students' work to the level of "teaching material" from which others can learn and benefit, as this comment by a student reveals: "By reading other students' writing I learned new ways of expressing thoughts and ideas in English, and I also realized that many of my views were one-sided."

If we want students to assume responsibility for their learning and to rely more on their powers of thinking and analysis, then the teacher for her part, must be willing to take a back seat and to some degree relinquish the role of expert and one who bestows knowledge and truth that we are so used to playing and that students often expect us to play. Applying this to daily teaching, one of the things I try very consciously to be aware of is to avoid being too directive, to refrain from presenting students with a lot of information that has been pre-packaged or giving my own views on some topic or issue or my own interpretations of something we have seen or read together. Instead, I attempt to lead them through the process of interpreting and comparing data, formulating hypotheses, discussing various possible explanations, and giving shape to their own opinions and viewpoints. In other words, I try to

provide as much opportunity as possible for students to think on their own without relying on me or being influenced by my ideas.

One of the ways I do this is by not giving information that students themselves are capable of getting on their own. For instance, I will present students with data (e.g. facts and figures in the form of a graph or table) and have them interpret the data (often in groups); or, if I give students a story to read or a video to watch, I provide the minimum amount of information beforehand; the point is I want them to try to discover their own answer to the question, "What's the message of the story?" or "What is the writer trying to tell us?" And when they read other students' reactions to and interpretations of the same material they can see that multiple interpretations are possible, depending, impart, on what individual viewers or readers brings to the material. One student referred to this in a course evaluation:

When I asked you [the instructor], "What is the main theme of the film?", you said something like, "You don't have to be concerned about what the main theme is." When I heard that, I realized how much I had always been concerned about coming up with the response that the teacher would find acceptable. And understood that unconsciously, my fear of writing down something different from what the teacher thought had led me to take the safer route of simply replying, "I don't know."

To give another example, I hardly ever write lecture notes on the board. In their past schooling students have been used to copying down faithfully what the teacher writes on the board or underlying those parts the teacher tells them are important and must be learned. What I want students to do is to listen, think, and decide for themselves what is important for them to write down and reflect on. In the beginning of the course, before I have explained to them why I am not going to write much on the board, some students do not even bother to take out their notebooks and pens. When I do approach the board and pick up a piece of chalk, at once there is a commotion as several students reach into their bags for notebooks and pens and start copying down what I am writing.

What I have described are just a few of the ways in which I have tried to alter the dynamics of student-teacher and student-student relationships and behaviors in the classroom in such a way that students rather than the teacher plays the dominant role in the learning process. However, it requires, I think, considerable discipline on the part of the teacher to refrain from taking charge and exercising control, as we are so accustomed to doing. I still frequently find that I have to restrain myself from stepping in too often to give my views or to "tidy up" what a student has said. But gradually, to use Schib's (1985) words,

I have come to understand that working with students, as opposed to preaching at them, means that I have to be satisfied with sequencing insights over a span of an entire semester, letting students hatch them at their own pace--or at least with only some hastening interventions now and then. I would have shattered the chance of prolonging

the dialogue if I had prematurely announced the ideas it had confirmed." (p. 260)

At the same time, however, I have found it necessary to recognize and take account of the fact that student expectations of the respective role of teacher and student may be very different from what I have in mind. While I want to de-emphasize my authority and leadership role and create a more democratic classroom in which I would function more as a "resource person" who would "facilitate" students' development of critical thought, many students seem to want more direction and structure. Farber relates a similar conflict over student-teacher role expectations: "We fought a silent battle, the students and I--they demanding ever more of me; I demanding ever more of them" (1985, p. 205). The following is a comment from a third-year student in my course on women and education:

I can appreciate the positive aspects of teaching that places importance on valuing the individual students' viewpoints and experiences, having discussions and exchange of opinions and presentations by individuals and groups. But on the other hand, we didn't seem to arrive at any definite conclusions so that at the end of the course I didn't know clearly what I had learned.

While my reaction to such comments is one of exasperation ("This student has missed the whole point of what I've been trying to do!"), if we are serious about wanting to promote a partnership relationship in the classroom, I think it is necessary to acknowledge and talk about the differences in expectations of the teacher and students' respective roles in the classroom and the discomfort they may be experiencing and explain what it is we are trying to accomplish, rather than to leave students feeling they are simply being coerced into going along with something the teacher has decided upon and powerless to exert any influence. Students ought to be made to feel there is room for negotiations, and teachers should make compromises by, e.g. giving more brief syntheses and "mini-lectures." By periodically eliciting reactions from students we can assess students' reactions and by incorporating some of their suggestions and making changes to respond to what they perceive as their needs, we are in fact allowing them to be participants in the decision-making process and demonstrating that we indeed value their input.

A final point that I want to caution teachers to be watchful of, particularly those who teach women's studies or who deal with gender and other issues in their teaching, is that our commitment to particular goals and our desire to raise our students' consciousness about certain issues may lead us at times to exert pressure on students to conform to an orthodoxy (in my case, feminist orthodoxy). Such pressure represents not only an abuse of authority but also counters our goal of fostering independent, critical thinking. I am sometimes strongly tempted to start preaching at students when I find myself struggling to overcome stereotyped, biased notions and attitudes about women and gender roles that run counter to my own beliefs. Yet to

do so would only confirm a preconception many students already have of women's studies as a discipline with a purely political agenda. As one student wrote in a class evaluation, "There was one thing I feared before I took this course. That was that the teacher would try to force a particular way of thinking on us, such as that 'Women must become independent' or that 'Women must not hide in the shadow of males.'" I have found that many students are very sensitive to any indication that the instructor is pressuring them--however subtly--to adopt a particular view or ideology. Some will have the courage to point out this out to the instructor; others may respond by refusing to risk having their own views rejected or put down. It is fine if students are able to recognize and resist such pressures; the greater danger is when they surrender to those pressures and respond by echoing feminist rhetoric in an effort to please the instructor (see Rothfield, 1987).

Allowing for Student Input in the Phase of Student Evaluation and Assessment

If we take seriously the view that learning women's studies is indeed a joint venture and that students must be responsible for their learning, then we must allow for students to have input in the process of evaluation and assessment--both of their own work and the course itself. Whether or not an instructor agrees with the concept of grading--and many in women's studies do not--(see, e.g, Rowland 1987), in the academic settings in which we work it is generally required. If that is the case, I feel students should be allowed to have a voice in determining what is to be the basis for grading and in addition give their input in deciding on their own grade.

I take up this issue in the first session of my course. The course description explains the requirements for the course and explains the various criteria on which I will be basing students' grades; but on the question of whether or not attendance ought to be counted, I ask students to decide. I point out the pros and cons, then have students take a vote. At the end of the semester I give students the same checklist of criteria for grading that I had explained to them in the very first session and ask the students to give themselves a grade based on their judgment of the extent to which they feel they have met those criteria over the course of the semester. They are also invited to make comments that might further explain their grade.

My rationale for eliciting and making use of students self-evaluations in determining their grades is based on my belief that if we are to give grades, then those grades ought to reflect how much effort students have put into the course and how much they have developed as learners, and that the teacher's assessment may not--cannot--accurately reflect those outcomes. The goals a student has set for herself in a course may be different from those which the teacher has set for the students, and in a sense, students ought to be judged, I think, on the basis of the degree to which they have succeeded in meeting their own goals. It is very difficult for the

teacher, or anyone else other than the individual herself, to perceive the changes and development she has undergone simply by observing outward classroom behavior, and therefore we need to take into account the judgment of the individual herself. I think each student is capable of making a judgment about how hard she has worked, what she has learned, and each has some comparative basis for grading herself based on reading other students' homework assignments, hearing oral presentations of group reports, and observing how various classmates participate in class and group discussions.

I take the students' self-evaluations into consideration, along with records I have kept of their assignments, attendance (when students have voted to have attendance considered), group reports, and participation in class. In most cases, my evaluation parallels the self-evaluation of students, though I have found some tendency on the part of those who I feel have performed least well to give themselves inflated grades, while on the other hand, the "best" students often give themselves lower grades than I think they deserve. My hope is that by going through this process of self-reflection and self-evaluation, and realizing that their evaluation will be taken into consideration in determining the final grade, they will not look upon their grade as something that is decided solely by the teacher, the "one who holds power over them," but as the outcome of a process in which they have played a necessary and important role. Joint learning must, in my view, be jointly evaluated.

Students' self-reflections can also help us get a slightly better view of them as individuals, which is so difficult in a large class, and to understand some of the inner struggles a student may be undergoing both with the subject matter and in terms of trying to meet teacher's expectations about what the students' role should be. We might learn, for instance, that a student who rarely speaks up in class or appear not to show much interest in what is going on may, in fact, be taking in a great deal, as these comments reveal:

Since I didn't take part very often in class discussions perhaps I wasn't able to contribute very much to the class. Yet this doesn't mean I was just a passive participant. What I did mainly was to listen to other people's views and opinions, but I listened with a great deal of interest and was able to learn a lot, so that I felt I was actively participating. I do regret not having expressed my thoughts more readily, but I feel that in my own way I participated to the best of my ability.

Over the course of the year I wrote almost all of the assignments in English. It would have been much easier to communicate my ideas and feelings by writing in Japanese, but since in principle the course was supposed to be conducted in English, I wanted to put in as much effort into [writing in] English as I could. . . With regard to speaking up in class, I wasn't able to do speak up as much as I wanted to. . . I always just kept my thoughts to myself. . . Ultimately, the problem was lack of effort on my part. And because of that I was unable, regrettably, to get other people to understand me as an individual.

. . . I feel I put forth more effort in this course than in any other this past year. Yet, even though I worked very seriously in other ways, with regard to participation in class discussions, I didn't. Because I didn't feel confident in my ability to skillfully get across

what I wanted to say, I failed to take advantage of the opportunity we were given to express our points of view. I wish I had learned not only about women's studies but also more about how to take part in discussions.

Finally, in addition to having students undertake self-evaluations, I have them evaluate the course and the instructor. Many of the students have, at some point, been asked for comments and reactions to their course, but they are quite taken aback when I ask them to grade me, the instructor. In explaining my purpose for doing so, I emphasize that criticism ought not to be regarded as something negative, but rather something we can all, including the teacher, benefit from, since we, like the students, are continually in the process of learning and discovering, and that in order to create a course in partnership with students, teachers need their input. Furthermore, I point out, their comments and suggestions will be helpful and beneficial to those students who will be following them. Let me end by emphasizing the fact that evaluations need not and should not be limited to the end of a course; there is need for continuous evaluation and feedback between teachers and students. Thus, for example, every other week or so, I have students write a few sentences at the end of the class period noting what they learned, and whether or not they were able to understand what the instructor was talking about.

Conclusion

As Schniedewind and Maher (1987) astutely note, ". . .changing the process of how we teach is often more difficult and risky than changing the content of what we teach" (p. 4). While it is convenient to imagine that one can simply incorporate the content of women's studies into the curriculum and present it to students in the traditional format, in fact process and content are inextricably linked, and *how* we teach is vitally significant in terms of what students learn. A semester, or even a year, however, does not provide enough time or opportunities for implementing the kinds of practices I have suggested, much less for establishing new patterns of classroom relationships and behavior. I think we need to adopt a long-term perspective and not expect either our students or ourselves to change significantly over the short-term. Moreover, I think it's important to remind ourselves that in any given course different students--whether they be Japanese or non-Japanese, female or male, learn different things at different paces.

Let me end by quoting what Rich (1978) says following the lines I presented at the very beginning of this paper,

As women teachers, we can either deny the importance of this context in which women students think, write, read, study, project their own futures; or try to work with it. We can either teach passively, accepting these conditions, or actively, helping our students

identify and resist them. One important thing we can do is discuss the context. And this need not happen only in a women's studies course; it can happen anywhere. We can refuse to accept passive, obedient learning and insist upon critical thinking. We can become harder on our women students, giving them the kinds of "cultural prodding" that men receive, but on different terms and in a different style. . . We need to keep our standards very high, not to accept a woman's preconceived sense of her limitations; we need to be hard to please, while supportive of risk-taking, because self-respect often comes only when exacting standards have been met. (p. 244)

Though Rich is specifically addressing women teachers who teach women, her words are a valuable reminder to all of us who are committed to the goal of transforming teaching in order to liberate the full potential of our students.

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A SOCRATIC APPROACH TO FOSTERING GENDER-BALANCED DISCUSSIONS

Jerome Young

Introduction

As a social institution, teaching is profoundly influenced by the prejudices that are embodied in the society in which teachers live. Teachers, after all, do not begin their lives as teachers but as social animals, as Aristotle puts it, within a family and society. As a consequence, we all view the proper order of things in life through a kaleidoscope colored by our own personal social experiences within the context of socially accepted values. By the time we social animals become teachers we have internalized the values and associated biases embedded in our social institutions, biases that inevitably affect our attitudes and actions.

As a language teacher, I am a novice. I have never received any formal training to teach language. I've studied philosophy for thirteen years and have been teaching philosophy for the past four years (one year at Keio SFC). My goal at Keio SFC has been to teach philosophy, focusing on developing my students' reasoning skills with their English language skills developing as a consequence. With my lack of training in language education and my short two years of residence in Japan, you might feel skeptical about what I have to say about gender in the language classroom. However, I feel that my approach in the classroom lends itself to helping students to become better critical thinkers by giving them the opportunity to reflect on their values. This approach aims to investigate and question the students' values and, naturally, on occasion confronts gender stereotypes. Another significant feature to this approach is that it also forces us teachers to think critically about our own values. This approach is not the easiest to use, nor is it always the most pleasant, but it is effective at promoting discussion and reflection. What particularly interests me in this paper is the internalization of gender roles and the way teaching can either reinforce these roles and, at times, break the gender stereotypes.

A Socratic-Style Approach to Values Clarification

The approach I use in the classroom is called the "Socratic," or discussion, method. It is a very old method used by Socrates and immortalized in the writings of Plato. Essentially, in this method one person asks a question; someone answers and then that answer may be questioned in turn and this questioning/answering continues ad infinitum (or, at least, until the participants in the discussion are tired!). This method can help students (and teachers alike) become aware

of their own beliefs, values and biases, and it gives everyone, male and female, the chance to explain themselves. For example, often a person's first response to a complex question will be an unreflecting response based on some social value he or she has accepted. However, others may ask why this person accepts this viewpoint and then he or she has to think about it and explain why he or she thinks this way. This explanation is then frequently questioned further. To illustrate, in my ethics classes in the USA, those opposed to abortion frequently said they were opposed to abortion because of the sanctity of life, but other students would ask them if they were also in favor of capital punishment; if they responded "yes" then the discussion would turn to how these two values can be reconciled. Without doubt, such discussions are heated and intense, but very constructive for they force the participants to engage in deep discussions on issues that certainly deserve careful deliberation. This method cannot make social biases go away, but it can raise consciousness about the biases and, maybe, by causing reflection, bring about a change of viewpoint. As I will describe later, this approach often brings to the surface gender biases and it can cause students to reflect on the wisdom of accepted social values. Even though this approach can in no way guarantee a change of viewpoint, presuming that a change of viewpoint is desirable, it does force the participants of the discussions to address gender values, among others.

The most positive aspect of a Socratic-style approach in the classroom is that it fosters discussion among students on serious issues. True, this approach tends to minimize the teacher's role in the classroom so that the teacher is NOT the central figure in the discussion. But, by placing the students together in groups with a problem and by giving them some independence, they learn to work together by listening, responding and questioning each other. The teacher ideally is a mediator when necessary and displays disinterested interest otherwise. So, when properly executed, this method breaks down that familiar classroom scene in which a student will only address the teacher and the teacher will only address the individual student and where students simply ignore each other. In the traditional classroom, students sometimes just say what they think the teacher wants to hear; however, when the teacher is saying less, it is harder for students to do this and thus it is possible for many more viewpoints and ideas to emerge. My goal is to get students to talk freely with each other as competent thinkers, rather than as just friends, and to accept each other as persons whose viewpoints are valuable and deserve consideration. A Socratic-style approach to teaching makes this possible.

Though I am a novice, it became clear to me early in my teaching experience in Japan that the key to teaching ethics in Japan, as in the USA, is selecting issues relevant to the society and asking questions that will help students to think about the issues in more than a superficial manner. Some of the arcane issues surrounding topics like abortion which excite the feelings and imagination of American students don't excite their Japanese counterparts and they, consequently, don't want to talk about them. However, when the issue is placed in the context

of Japanese society (e.g., abortion and the Eugenic Protection Act) more students, male and female, are interested and willing to express themselves. These discussions are more educational (and sometimes more entertaining) for the students because they help to shed light on certain social values held by many Japanese people and on the ways the social order embodied in the values is changing (e.g., the "*umeyo, fuyaseyo*" slogan ["go forth and bear children"]) no longer has the force it once did).

Although this approach to teaching is one with which students are unfamiliar, I am finding that it is effective at helping students to learn a difficult subject matter and, in the case of Japanese students, to improve their language skills. Moreover, this method forces teachers (at least until students become accustomed to doing this themselves) to ask challenging questions and be a role model to students for how to tie ideas together, how to listen to other people, and how to question assumptions embedded in value judgments. A Socratic approach, as I use it, is "student-centered," and offers students an opportunity to become active in their learning and gives them a sense of responsibility that can carry through to their lives outside school. Ideally, then, this method should "empower" all students, both male and female. It encourages a variety of viewpoints and this, in itself, is important in ethics since ethics thrives on diverse judgments --without diversity, ethics becomes a totalitarian exercise not for the faint of heart. I find that once my students get used to this approach, they like it. In fact, my students seem to enjoy getting differing opinions on the issues and marvel at the endless possibilities that arise in the course of discussion. However, having said this, I express a note of caution because there are problems that I regularly encounter in using this method.

Problems Encountered Using a Socratic-Style Approach

One of the first problems I encounter, whether in the USA or Japan, is that students frequently want me simply to "tell them the answers" (bias and all) to the problems posed rather than having to suffer through thinking for themselves. Teachers often prefer this, too, because we want to justify ourselves as scholars to students and because we don't want students to challenge our authority. Furthermore, we think that we are *right*. We, thus, want to influence and guide students' thinking. A Socratic approach, however, is possibly more effective at persuading students; hopefully, if the teacher is "right", students will reach the same conclusion on their own. And in the case where the teacher is "wrong" (a case which we are perhaps unwilling to think about), students have the opportunity to learn from each other.

Without doubt, thinking for oneself is a painful process. Putting students in small groups and asking them to discuss an issue is one way to push them to think for themselves. However, value judgments, especially subtle ones concerning gender roles, can skew the discussions. Most frustrating of all about this method (from an educator's viewpoint) is that students often

find it difficult to listen, understand, and respond to each others' ideas. While students seem inclined to listen to (or sleep through!) teachers' lectures, they seem disinclined (perhaps because of lack of practice) to take each other seriously. Sometimes in my Japanese classroom, students struggle with English, but other times their "difficulty" (a difficulty I also found in the American classroom) stems from a gender bias in which it is assumed that men and their ideas are more valuable than women and their ideas.

I have observed that, when students in my classes in Japan perceive that one group member, frequently a male student, has "taken charge" of the situation, it's easy for them to let that person dictate the course of the group's discussion. As a teacher, I can offset this dynamic by trying to encourage the silent participant(s), who are sometimes male, but more often female in the classes I have taught, to express themselves. This is not always easy, of course. I can silence someone who dominates a discussion and ask the silent members for their views, but it's very hard to break a silence that refuses to be broken. Certainly, if a student doesn't want to express his or her feelings on an issue, there is very little a teacher can do, short of gentle encouragement, to get that student to break the silence. This has been my experience in the USA as well, but to a lesser degree--students in the USA, when pressed, will at least express their "opinion" if only because they are conscious that a large portion of their grade depends on class participation. At this point, however, the method has broken down because the students don't want to speak within the group and will only speak to me. In my classes in Japan, for whatever reason, they often just shake their heads seemingly uncomprehendingly. Occasionally, however, a silent Japanese student, when questioned by me, will express his or her view and even concede now and then that he or she does not agree with the group's decision. Again, however, the method has broken down.

Whether in the USA or Japan, it is difficult to get other participants (and even myself sometimes!) to have an integrated conversation instead of one either made of disjointed ideas or one in which one voice dominates. The goal is dialectic, but it is not always achieved. In my classes, sometimes, some of the students (often male students) will simply ignore the other students (often female students) in a group; other times, the group decisions will often reflect a single (usually male) viewpoint. Once in one of my classes in the USA, a group dominated by male voices asserted that their group felt abortion was wrong under all circumstances, but it was clear that their "decision" lacked the input of the two female participants who told me after class that they didn't agree with the decision and that their objections were simply ignored. This class was a medical ethics class in which the students studied scenarios and were told to pretend that they were on an ethics committee at a hospital deciding the fate of ethically challenging cases. Needless to say, the two female students were disturbed by the outcome of this "committee's" decision. It's difficult to know why the male voice tends to dominate discussions: Is it gender socialization, or, as is in vogue today, is it genetic? In Japan, the situation is complicated further

by in-group and out-group status so that a student, whether male or female, may be ignored simply because he or she is not in the in-group.

Another common difficulty with using a Socratic approach is frustration, inevitably experienced by students because answers to questions are routinely questioned (by me and--to their dismay--by other students). When a student questions another student's value judgment, the students can get a bit testy. Questions often give the impression of a challenge and sometimes they do fundamentally challenge a student's belief which may in turn be a value shared by others in society. This is necessary of course, because if the ideas are not questioned, then students will not learn to explain their beliefs (and thus not try to understand why they believe what they believe) and will likely think that their belief is absolute. Questioning their values (and thus their beliefs) is a reality check that forces them to reflect on their value judgements and, hopefully, to learn more about themselves and the basis of their beliefs. Value judgments are especially difficult to challenge, since we have always "known" that our judgments are "right."

A Classroom Experiment to Promote a Reasonable Skepticism

To a greater degree than their American counterparts, Japanese students I have worked with aim to avoid conflict and think that if they all agree with a "solution" to an ethical dilemma, then the problem is solved satisfactorily--even if there are students who offer little substance to the discussion. In my experience this is also true in the USA, but some students seem more willing to express their views even if they provoke the wrath of their classmates. Even though I emphasize to my students that ethics is a grey field of study and not at all black and white, they confidently think that they can solve any problem. This belief itself needs to be addressed because students tend to treat serious subjects casually (i.e., unreflectively) and thus produce superficial answers to complicated problems. In producing their "solutions," voices which dissent from the group view are often shut out of the decision making process.

To overcome this tendency I routinely perform an experiment to get my students to recognize the importance of maintaining a reasonable skepticism when discussing and forming judgments on ethical issues. I begin this experiment by giving my students a brief lecture on an ethical issue/dilemma and talk with them about some of the issues involved in it. I then divide the students up into small groups and give them a scenario (or a short argumentative essay) along with several questions to get them thinking about the issues and to try, as a group, to answer. Each group works independently from the rest, but the tendency of each group is to arrive at a seemingly "absolute" (unanimous) answer to each case which would be applicable to all similar cases. I ask that one student from each group take protocol (minutes) for their group's discussion. Near the end of class, I have the protocol taker from each group present a

summary of their group's answer to the questions. At the beginning of the semester I inevitably find that each group is able to reach a consensus (frequently with NO dissent from anyone). Perhaps each group feels that they must reach an agreement or solution. I'm sure that sometimes such agreement is genuine, but, from experience, I have little faith that, for example, seven individual students could each agree with their group's decision on such issues as capital punishment, sexual harassment, or pornography. Whatever the reason for their initial unanimous agreement, when the summaries are presented to the class, the solutions the groups reached independently are different in significant ways. Students are surprised, amused and disconcerted. At this point the seeds of skepticism are planted.

Once when I performed this experiment in an ethics class in Japan, I gave students a scenario involving a mentally handicapped person who murdered someone while in the act of robbery. The groups arrived at these recommended treatments of the criminal: 1) incarceration in a mental institution; 2) no punishment at all; 3) a short jail sentence; 4) the death penalty. This exercise shows the students in a forceful way that ethics problems have more than one answer. (Although some people feel ethics should be able to reach absolutes, I don't share that belief. This experiment has shown me time and time again that values are relative and that it's best to approach ethical issues from this vantage point. Any absolute positions should be left to religion. Ethics must accommodate diversity of opinion and a willingness to compromise otherwise it is an exercise in futility.) It also shows each student that any disagreement with their group that they may have been harboring should not have been suppressed for the sake of an agreement, since even if everyone within their group agrees, either genuinely or in order to avoid conflict, other groups have reached different conclusions. They are able to hear with their own ears the differing opinions that result from the simultaneous deliberations and know, in a more profound way than I could ever tell them, that whatever their opinions are, they are worth putting on the table for all group members to consider.

Protocol Assignments and Gender Bias

After this initial experiment, I then assign one student from each group each week to write a summary of their group's discussion. The student who takes notes is supposed to be the leader of the group for that day and make sure everyone gives voice to their ideas and beliefs and to take sufficient notes of the discussion to be able to write a summary. Copies of the protocol are then distributed to all the members of the class at the start of the next session. In this assignment, I've noticed a difference between the way male and female students complete it. In my classes, in both Japan and the USA, sometimes a female student will concentrate on taking notes, conceding the leadership role to a dominant male voice and will, thus, assume for herself the role of secretary. In doing so, she effectively excludes herself from the decision making process, at least until the actual writing occurs. Other times, I have seen a male student who is taking protocol casually ignore

female students' input into the discussion, thus writing a summary without the female students' comments included.

This latter phenomenon happened once during a class at Keio on pornography. I approached one of the groups (consisting of four male students and one female student) and listened to their discussion. At the time, the female student was in the process of a very mature and intelligent explanation of why men want pornography. I noticed that the male protocol taker was not writing down anything she said. I was surprised because I thought she had some really good insights and I felt that he should be writing them down so that he could use them later when he wrote his summary of their discussion. I asked him if he was getting her ideas down on paper. Of course, he wasn't, but he tried to appease me by making a half-hearted attempt to do so. When he returned the following week with his typed protocol, much to my surprise, he included not a single word of her very illuminating explanation. Here was an erudite explanation of why men want pornography, but it was ignored. Why did he ignore her? Maybe because he has a low opinion of women as thinkers, maybe because she was not in his in-group, maybe because he simply could not understand her, or maybe because he felt that what she said was of no value. I don't know why because I am not he, but his action was disturbing.

The cumulative effect of this sort of behavior is significant and is, in my classes, at least, a general trend. Since I distribute copies of student's protocols to the entire class, the effects are not limited to one group or one person. Clearly, the female student whose comments were ignored is affected when she hears and reads the protocol. However, other students may be affected as well. At the very least, other students who hear and read the protocol are deprived of an alternative viewpoint. In this case, the female student's opinion *could* have been just what another student wanted or needed to hear, but the opportunity was missed.

When I see these kinds of things happening (female protocol takers being quiet or male protocol taker ignoring female students), I try to counter them, sometimes with success, sometimes not. Sometimes I will encourage those who are silent to speak and listen to their comments and then (if necessary) try to integrate those comments with the rest of the discussion; other times I will ask the protocol taker if s/he is getting everyone's comments on the question under discussion--and tell them not to hesitate to ask someone to repeat what s/he said. However, whether they listen to me or not is up to them. They write the protocol and when they return to class to read it, all I can do is react and ask them questions.

The Gender Bias of Voices in the Classroom

The largest problem in my student-centered classroom discussions is making sure all voices, male and female, are heard. The male voice traditionally, in both the east and the west, is perceived as the voice of authority and requires attention while the female voice is perceived as marginal and

easily ignored. This is a phenomenon I witnessed (and sometimes contributed to) as a student in classrooms in the USA, England and Germany and as a teacher in the USA and Japan. In American society, as in Japanese society, when men and women both speak, often it is the male voice that receives the attention (and expects the attention). In a group dominated by one or two male voices, the female students are often ignored. Their opinion may be asked for, but with a lack of enthusiasm or interest. People in general can key into subtle behavioral patterns and know whether their ideas are valued or not. All too often, students respond to these kinds of behavioral nuances by simply agreeing with the "leaders" and remaining aloof or silent. This is a pathetic situation in an educational setting and one that not only students engage in. Teachers, too, ignore students, especially female students, (unconsciously, or through bad faith) by not giving them the kind of encouragement they deserve (and pay for!). The result: Silence and a reluctance in the future to willingly express their ideas.

One way I have sought to get the quiet female students to be more active in group discussions on ethical issues has been to use issues discussed frequently in women's studies classes (e.g., reproductive technology, sexual harassment, pornography and so on). Since the issues may have touched their own personal experience, they are more apt to express themselves and, since the topics include ones in which women are supposed to have some particular insight, the male students are also more inclined to listen to them (although not always, as my previous example on pornography illustrates). Using these kinds of issues, along with a Socratic-style approach, gives students the chance, if willing, to discuss the wisdom of received gender values and attitudes and challenge the socially accepted values from which many of their own value judgments receive reinforcement.

Although it's during these discussions in particular that I have noticed that the female voice expresses itself most forcefully (with less hesitancy, more articulation and insight), it is also a time when the conventional wisdom embodied in accepted values are reinforced and reaffirmed. This reinforcement and reaffirmation is done not only by both male and female students but is also done by teachers.

As a teacher using a student-centered approach, I need to be sensitive to the possible imbalance between male and female input into a discussion. This sometimes entails actively supporting female students, by encouraging them to speak and by listening to them and encouraging other students (particularly male students) to listen, by giving them material to study that interests them, by acknowledging their insights, and simply by encouraging them to think. However, it's not always easy to do this and, in fact, I find that I on occasion give way to cultural bias and let a male voice (mine included) squash the female student's voice as she tries to express her beliefs and to be heard. Sometimes I'm able to get the students to integrate their ideas and consider the value of each other's arguments, but this often entails postponing an eager male voice for the equally eager though less "hearable" female voice. Other times, though, it's easier to just let

the discussion take its seemingly natural course and allow the male voice to dominate. When I fall back on these biases, I can tell by the look on the face of the female student, who has just been ignored or not engaged further in conversation about her ideas, that she is frustrated, especially when a male voice intrudes and gets the focus of attention. I have seen it happen and done nothing to stop it; I could rationalize this, of course, but, simply put, I failed as a good role model. Once I lose someone like this it's hard for her to get enough confidence back (in herself and in me) to speak again. It's a painful lesson for a teacher (especially a language teacher!) and one which he or she should not fall prey to. The male students who are reluctant to speak are, for me, not as much of a problem because male banter usually gets them to start speaking and to feel at ease in the classroom setting. However, this banter doesn't seem to work for female students.

Conclusion

Only through a determined effort is it possible to recognize a bias in our actions and attitudes and then seek to *change* it. Even if as teachers we strive to be aware of these biases and confront them, we are still, likely as not, to fall prey to their subtle influence. A Socratic-style approach is not a panacea to solve all social ills (or even gender biases encountered in the classroom), but it is a useful, concrete way to begin to know oneself and question socially accepted values. By using this approach in the classroom, we as teachers can begin to understand ourselves better, but, more importantly, we open up the possibility for students to know themselves and to appreciate the diverse opinions of their colleagues. The sometimes painful awakening to personal bias embedded in our unreflecting value judgments is, if nothing else, disconcerting, and is, at most, enriching for it can serve as the slap in the face that wakes us from our proverbial "dogmatic slumbers" and forces both us, students and teachers, to grow and change.

TEACHING ABOUT SOCIAL INEQUALITY AND GENDER IN THE LANGUAGE CLASSROOM

Thomas Hardy

A couple of years ago, I was out at night with some students from an English class I teach and we started talking about being male and female in Japan. I watched again and again as male students regularly took for granted female students' services--serving drinks, tidying up the table, and such. I listened again and again as females regularly acquiesced to male students in speaking and in sharing experiences, ideas and analyses. Finally I intervened and asked what was going on. To me the assumed and accepted inequality between male and female students was obvious and pernicious. At first my inquiries got little more response than, "What are you talking about?" I persisted, and was finally rewarded with a female student's insight, "That's not inequality, that's how we do it," a response seconded by a male student's comment, "Yeah. That's the Japanese way." This experience first started me thinking about my own responses to the matter and was my first impetus for trying to figure out how to introduce the concepts of social inequality and gender in content-based language classes.

I share with the students in my English classes at Tamagawa University a position of relative privilege--in my American case, as a white male with a professional family background, in theirs, commonly belonging to the dominant cultural group and often being pampered by their upper-middle class families. From discussions with students, I see that as an undergraduate, I shared with them a sense of the world that comes with this position: life was good and I should expect nothing else but good from life. As with them, I had a limited understanding of and sympathy with the victims of institutionalized social inequality. It was not until I experienced some of the problems and prejudices that come with belonging to a relatively marginalized sexual orientation that I started to "get it." I got an inkling of my privileged access to wealth, power, and prestige that had little or nothing to do with my abilities. I got the ways I had benefited from my sex, race and class. I got a sense of social inequality.

A second impetus for a class on social inequality and gender stems from my professional understanding of anthropology as a discipline historically and theoretically committed to the reflective study of social inequality and gender issues. Reflective discussion of these issues permeates theoretical debates in four different anthropologically-related fields: first, biological anthropology and issues of race and gender and human evolution (Ehrenberg, 1989); second, archaeology and the role of gender and class in, for example, state formation (Gailey, 1987), and the origins of agriculture (Gero & Conkey, 1991); third, linguistics and sociolinguistic studies of the ways class, race, and gender shape people's language and unequal access to valued resources (Landau, 1995); and finally, sociocultural anthropologists' theories and

ethnographies of cultural constructions of gender (Herdt, 1982), sexuality (Gilmore, 1990), social stratification (Rapp, 1977), kinship (Weston, 1991), politics (Ginsburg, 1987), ritual and religion (Shokeid, 1995), and development (Boserup, 1970). This range of sample topics and issues, in all four fields, allows anthropologists to see the range of human experience and the diversity of responses. In turn, this can awaken in the observer a sense of the constraints she or he lives under and a sense of the alternatives possible.

A third impetus for a class on gender and social inequality complements my personal and professional concerns. In discussions with students, I have found few who object to things as they are in Japan; their youth and relative privilege might explain this placidity. But I sense a larger dynamic and relate their unthinking acceptance of social inequalities based on sex, class, and race to the received stereotypes of Japanese society. This view sees Japanese society, as compared with other industrialized societies, as remarkably uniform--a homogeneous, harmonious social whole bounded by a continuous cultural tradition. This view has recently been developed in gender relations by Iwao (1993). Such a stereotype ignores the realities of social inequality in Japan: profound inequalities of access to wealth, power, and prestige, based on an individual's sex or gender, social class, and ethnic group (see Halliday [1975] for an early theoretical/historical account in English of this view of Japanese society; a recent edited work on diversity in Japanese society by Maher & Macdonald [1995]; and recent ethnographic works by Allison [1994], Lebra [1993]; Hamabata [1990]; and Sato [1991]). I use this class as a place to start students thinking about the workings of social inequality and cultural stereotypes in their lives and society.

My classes on gender and social inequality are, in part, a place to engage my concerns--personal, professional, and social--while teaching students English. In these classes students can reflect on received notions of social relations in Japanese society, explore the ways sex and gender shape social inequalities in Japan today, and hopefully, leave with a little greater self-awareness of their place in society and alternatives to it.

Starting from these premises and impulses, the class has two more or less explicit goals. First is language acquisition, and my sense that a language class is more than drills in verbs; learning a language can be much more than memorizing formulae for travel or business. A successful language class, in addition to increasing students' control over vocabulary, grammar, and such, engages them personally and intellectually. Hopefully, the topic will stretch and develop the students' critical thinking and analytical skills--skills useful in learning the language itself, and in learning how to use it. As noted in the introduction to this volume, current research suggests that content classes, such as this class on social inequality and gender, can accomplish the requisite English language goals.

A second goal springs from a lucky meeting of circumstance and professional interest and is based on an American feminist insight that the personal is political. It happens that I teach

classes composed largely of female students. Their interests, their personal lives, their expectations, all make gender an obvious topic. For them, whether they are conscious of it or not, the inequalities based on gender are a personal and daily experience. Given that students do personally encounter social inequality based on gender in their daily lives, an English language content class is a good place to start helping them see the inequalities they experience, raising their consciousnesses, and breaking received notions of social homogeneity, harmony, and coherence. The analytical skills learned from content-based language materials are pushed further as students reflect critically on the social relationships played out in the target language's society and the students' native society.

Gender and Social Inequality: The Course

Background concepts

The class starts with a discussion of the American premise that "all men are created equal" and the meanings of equality and inequality in the United States. From obvious inequalities or differences in, for example, height, or more importantly skill or intelligence, I lead the class to discuss inequalities based on group membership. Students come up with a welter of groups that suffer and benefit from social inequality, all of which I write on the board and then reduce to the basic sociological categories of social inequality: sex, age, social class, and ethnicity or race. We briefly discuss the ways these categories are created by society: the abiological nature of race, the ways societies construct gender from sex, and so on.

I next ask students "What kinds of things are divided unequally?" Or, "What does society give the lucky groups and keep from the unlucky groups?" Again, from a collection of student responses listed on the board, I derive the classical rewards of wealth, power, and prestige. Over a class or two we discuss the ways these rewards differ and the ways they hang together in complex societies like the United States and Japan. We usually conclude with a simplified description of Japanese society in terms of wealth, power, and prestige. In this view, wealth, in Japan, is controlled by the large corporations, banks, and holding companies and the control of this wealth exercised by individuals acting in the name of, for example, Mitsubishi, Mitsui, or Sumitomo. Power, formally, is in the hands of politicians and the instruments of state--laws and the enforcers of laws--they have created. Though not poor, few if any of them control true wealth; and all of them lack prestige. Prestige is the reward of bureaucrats, as they exercise executive control over laws created by those with power, and create conditions for the accumulation of wealth by the corporations. These bureaucrats, as bureaucrats, have little formal power or wealth, but great prestige and respect. This description helps students recognize the distinctions between wealth, power, and prestige, even while recognising the limitations of

the description and the overlapping of forms of rewards (for example, bureaucrats, upon leaving government service, often enter lucrative private work as consultants to the businesses they once governed, a common enough practice to have a dedicated Japanese metaphor: *amakudari*, to descend from heaven).

This intellectual construction--the ways society divides wealth, power, and prestige, based on sex, class, age, and race--is not particularly complex; in U.S. college introduction to sociology texts, it usually gets at most a chapter and is treated as self-apparent (Thio, 1986; Robertson, 1989). But simple as it is, it is new to my students and helps them work their way into further discussions on the nature and practice of social inequality. With this general introduction to social inequality out of the way, I ask students to choose one of ways societies divide themselves (age, sex, class, or race) for the class to study for the rest of the semester. About half the time students select sex and gender. The other half they select ethnicity and race, social class, or age, depending on their interests. In practice, it works out to one 12-week semester spent on gender inequalities, and one semester spent on one of the other topics.

Gender Inequalities in the United States

After a prereading exercise on their attitudes towards gender differences and social rewards, students read a couple of short passages. One is a relatively straightforward description adapted from a U.S. introduction to sociology text (Thio, 1986) of the ways gender shapes social inequalities in the United States today: women's limited access to wealth and the feminization of poverty; women and access to power, at work, in politics, and in their private lives; and women and access to prestige in, for example, education where women teach primary school and men teach at universities. The second reading, based on interviews with a friend, is an American woman's description of her experience of sexual inequality. In it she describes the problems of balancing work at the job with work at home, decries the need to overachieve at work to get equal recognition (promotion, and salary increases) with men, and talks of sexual harassment.

Following this academic description of gender inequalities in American life, the students go to the movies. At this point I face a dilemma: I want the students to have some depth of analysis and discussion, and at the same time I want them exposed to a range of gender inequalities visible in American popular culture. To get around this, I have students divide into small teams, three to five students per team. I assign each team a movie and its members are responsible for the deeper analysis of that film. Each team watches its movie out-of-class and using a viewing work sheet I distribute, analyzes the ways gender shapes the film's character's access to wealth, power, and prestige. I collect the viewing work sheets (this keeps students from reading their analyses instead of giving interviews) and then have students share their work

with other students using a version of information gap interviews: they use an interview work sheet I give them to get the analyses of two experts on the gender inequalities apparent in two other films. To a degree, this exercise gets around the dilemma described earlier: it gives the students some depth in analyzing a selected movie and some breadth as they share their analysis with other students and hear other students' analyses of other films. This brings us about a third of the way through the school term.

Gender Inequalities in Japan

In the second third of the term, students take their skills at analyzing gender inequalities in the United States and turn them on Japan. The first step is for them to get a sense of the dimensions of gender inequalities facing Japanese women. Using the earlier readings I provided as models, I assign each team of students one aspect of gender inequality and have them come up with a one-page description of how it operates in Japan. A team assigned the relationship of gender and wealth might document the differential between men's and women's wages for various types of work in various sectors of the economy. Another team focuses on prestige related concerns, such as the number of women attending graduate school at elite universities. Still another team of students researches power issues, such as women in politics, or decision making positions in government ministries.

As with the film analyses, I collect the descriptions before having students interview each other. An expert on gender and matters of prestige in Japan will have to interview experts on wealth and power to come up with a composite view of the unequal positions of men and women in Japanese society. If there is time, I ground this by having students watch films about women in Japan, using work sheets to analyze the films in terms of gender inequalities of wealth, power, and prestige. Many students find this eye opening. For instance, Kayoko wrote on a class evaluation,

I had thought that movies are mere fun. But in this class I had to watch some movies about social inequality. I learn each movies have each theme and each social problems, etc. Since then when I watch movies I want to watch, I become to think of the social background of the movie. For example, 'Regend of Fall' have social inequality. It is changing my thinking.

Or Miho noted, "I learned what the movie apealed is gender. I changed a way of watching by this."

Course projects

We spend the last third of the course doing projects. Earlier in the term, about the time we

start working on Japan, students had joined with their team and brainstormed up a list of topics which was shared with the class as a whole. Each team gradually narrowed the focus until it came up with a topic that both captured their interest and brought together issues of gender and inequalities of wealth, power, and prestige. In the main, the projects have been library based research papers. There was a biographical report on a Hiratsuka Reicho, a leading Taisho era feminist, and the ways gender based inequalities in access to wealth, power, and prestige shaped her career and feminist interests. Another group watched and read *The Color Purple* and analyzed the ways the violence against the women characters in it can be understood in terms of power inequalities between women and men, and between Blacks and Whites. Still another group took Japanese *kanji* containing either male or female radicals and compared their meanings and implications in terms of prestige inequalities between men and women.

Student responses to these projects have been positive. Yukiko wrote on a class evaluation, "Though it was very hard to investigate and think about, a lot of things I did--to writ in English, to know about both of American and Japanese society especially about social inequality in gender, to learn how to write report, and how to share the works of report with my partners. And I think this class was one of the most learned classes in a year, though it was very hard." Rumi agreed with her, "By hard project I learned discrimination between men and woman. I read books and watched videos about sex. By doing them I got many information. There is very much sexual discrimination. But women try to appeal for equality by various ways. I knew their feelings."

A few teams engaged in more ambitious projects involving original social research. This can be very simple. In one case it involved going to the offices of the women's junior college allied to Tamagawa University and counting the number of men and women in its office and their relative positions on the staff. The results disturbed some students. For example, Kazushi wrote, "What they thinking of to do such a thing. First is they not thinking." In another case, students took a junior high school Japanese language text (*kokugo*), counted the number of male and female contributors, the number of male and female characters, and the roles assigned to the characters, and took simple percentages of the results. In this case as well, some students were roused to anger. Yuko wrote, "Writers, caraters is not equal at all. And only girls have so many low actions and only boys have so many free actions. It is not being fair."

Conclusion

Student responses to what they've learned in the course have been positive, with comments in course evaluations on growth in English, group organizational skills, and intellectual development. They report progress in English vocabulary: "I learned to make ourselves the words of reports in English" (Yukiko); listening comprehension: "I think you

will become to understand native English” (Kayoko); composition: “You can be able to write English reports” (Kayoko); and speaking skills: “I learned to communication by speaking in English with the other people” (Toru).

In mid-term and end-of term course evaluations several students commented on the group learning process: “To cooperate with group member is interesting” (Akiko), “I noticed hard and pleasure of the group by the project. I thought the group was hard but it was very enjoy and became study for me very much” (Miho). This was a benefit I had not planned on and will develop in future versions of the course.

Of most importance to me were the students’ comments regarding their intellectual development. They seem to have learned to recognize the experience of gender inequalities in their own lives and the lives of those around them, inequalities that are simultaneously petty and gross. “At first, I had not know this word ‘Gender.’ There is many inequalities but gender is connected with me. Usually, I don’t think about gender deeply. But this class gave me many chances to think about gender and I myself could make my thinking deeply. It is my fruits” (Yuoko). “In this paper I learn to exist a lot of inequality in the world. I think that I need more understanding and I must make actions in my life and my future” (Toru). And there was some shaking up of assumptions about gender roles and stereotypes: “There are many discrimination to women around me. I have never thought about why women must cook? Why women must clean? . . . I think it is bad to say you can’t do it because you are a girl or you must do that because you are a boy. All men and women is same man. So we must not make a discrimination men and women, I thought” (Akiko).

But I am somewhat less satisfied. As an English teacher at a Japanese university, I am resigned to the structural limits on what I can do in a course. Twelve 90-minute class meetings spread over four months, with little or no homework possible, and spotty attendance, strongly shape what I can teach and expect students to learn. Their comments sound good; I would like more strongly felt responses. One route might lie in the difference in level of response described earlier between students doing library research and those doing social research. But I hesitate to require the time-consuming research of already over-extended and, if required, unwilling students. Those doing it now, do it because they’re interested in the topic and research approach, those assigned it might learn less than they do now in self-selected library research.

A second source of dissatisfaction with the course is harder to pin down. I believe students when they write that they have come to recognize the existence and, in some cases, the experience of gender inequalities. I would like students to take the next step and have this recognition lead to action of some sort in their lives. I realize this is a very American response: knowledge is for action. And it is a response based on cultural assumptions of social conflict and confrontation, assumptions that play very badly in a society based on smooth running functional relations and cooperation. Still, it is what I would like, and an underlying source of

dissatisfaction with the course. I take what comfort I can from the hope that what students learn in the class may, someday, help them to make sense of things happening to them and to fight against circumstance: a woman, trained only to be a wife and mother is abandoned by her husband; a qualified, hard-working, and committed woman in business is put on a non-career track, just for being a woman; a wife and mother, working full-time part-time work outside the home for not-really discretionary income is suddenly expected to take care of her husband's aging parents.

It may be that this dissatisfaction has more to do with my culture- and generation-bound notions of gender inequality and oppression than with the language development and social insights of the students. In ways that I can only guess at, my students may realize, consciously or not, some of the ways "good" power or "good" inequality operates in their society. Based on their life-experience in Japanese society, students may see such "good" gender inequalities as the functionally validated way males and females relate in a society vertical in so many other ways. They may sense that the gender hierarchy exists for itself as well as within the cultural metaphors that give meaning and structure and order to life in Japan. They may have notions of the ways expressive culture, for example, in popular and mass culture, inverts and critiques the existing social hierarchies without threatening them or the social and cultural stability and comfort they insure.

These are issues I will continue wrestling with, just as my English students will continue wrestling with the personal and professional assumptions underlying my teaching about social inequality and gender.

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THE PORTRAYAL OF MALES IN REALISTIC JUVENILE FICTION

Mark A. Valens

Through books, children learn about the world outside of their immediate environment. They learn about what boys and girls do, say and feel. They learn about what is right and wrong, and they learn what is expected of children their age. In addition books provide children with role models-images of what they can and should be when they grow up. (Dougherty & Engel, 1987, p. 394)

Novels, conversation textbooks, and every piece of writing presented to students deal with more than grammar, sentence structure, and writing styles. As students read, they learn of gender, race, and culture. Language teachers need to be aware of the characters they are presenting, in order to assess the stereotypes that are conveyed to the students. The textbooks and other reading materials used in Japan need to be examined to find how gender and people of various races are portrayed, for this is an area that has had little research to date. I will use the results of a first-language study I undertook that dealt with children's literature to demonstrate one way to assess the portrayal of males in reading material. This will be done in an attempt to show how we, as English teachers, can assess how gender is portrayed in the materials we use.

Two years ago, I wanted to combine my interests in anti-sexism and children's literature to examine how the books we expose children to in schools affect their perception of what it means to be "male." Obviously, the first step in such a study would be to examine past studies that have analyzed the portrayal of males. To my amazement, I could find no studies that I thought adequately looked at characters as wholes to say how males are portrayed in children's literature.

One question I felt needed to be answered then was, "How are males portrayed in children's literature?" In this article, I will present the results obtained when trying to answer this question.

Theoretical Framework

Much of an individual's personal identity and views of society's make up stem from the images presented to her or him as a child. Some of the most influential images are those found in schools.

In education women have 'learnt to lose' and more than that they have learnt *how* to lose, even though they may have had the ability to succeed academically. Through such experience they have learnt to accept that 'the *masculine* man is one who achieves, who is

masterful: the *feminine* woman is one who underachieves, who defers.' (Brewster as cited in Arnot, 1982, p. 65)

Books play a critical role in schooling, and therefore the images presented to students through books influence perceptions of gender. In Greenlaw, Scott, and Smith's (1987) opinion, the message from children's literature has told children that boys should be active and aggressive, not passive and reflective (p. 405). Although I agree with this statement, I could find no studies that backed up this opinion in a satisfactory way.

In the past, researchers tried to isolate a character's qualities in an attempt to make their analysis reliable. However, just like a person, a well-developed character is multidimensional and so must be looked at holistically to be understood. I felt that it is futile to isolate behavioral characteristics in the hopes that this will make the analysis bias free. Personal histories influence the interpretation of what is read, but this does not make what a particular person has to say any less valuable. I felt that deconstruction is the most effective way to analyze characters, for it allows one to see what is present, what is missing, and to use personal insights. This best reflects the way one reads any piece of writing. I admit I feel that too many people look for black-and-white answers when dealing with gender issues. I do not deny that I feel males suffer in a different way than females due to gender inequality, and that this is damaging to both sexes. This influences the way I interpret books, but I offer no apologies for this.

Reading is not an innocent act. We come to a text laden with cultural, social, ideological, and literary baggage, all of which influence our responses to that text. Concomitantly, our subjectivity is structured by the texts we read, and this is an ongoing, never-completed process. (Comley, 1992, p. 69)

It is for this reason that I do not try to avoid presenting my personal views, but view them as valid interpretations and give evidence of my statements from the data compiled through the analysis of the books in my literary analysis. Deconstruction was used to identify codes present in children's literature, and then these codes were used to examine the portrayal of male characters (Valens, 1995).

Sample Books

The books to be examined in this study were initially chosen based on the following criteria:

1. The book was a Newbery Award or Honor Mention or Canadian Library Association Book of the Year winner from 1975-1994.
2. The book contained at least one primary male character.
3. The book was realistic fiction.

Eight books were used in this study. The books covered a 20-year time period. Two Newbery Award, Honorable Mention and/or Canadian Library Association Book of the Year books that were either published or given the award from each of four five-year intervals (1975-1979 or Period One, 1980-1984 or Period Two, 1985-1989 or Period Three, 1990-1994 or Period Four) were chosen. Part of the selection criteria for these awards specifically looked at character development. All books meeting the preset criteria were placed in a pool and two from each time period were selected randomly. The books chosen for this study were *Dragonwings* (Yep, 1975), *River Runners* (Houston, 1979), *Ramona Quimby, Age 8* (Cleary, 1981), *The Sign of the Beaver* (Speare, 1983), *Like Jake and Me* (Jukes, 1984), *Hatchet* (Paulsen, 1987), *Maniac Magee* (Spinelli, 1990), and *Missing May* (Rylant, 1992).

The Code of Conflict Resolution

Male Characters Try to Resolve People-Against-People Conflicts Through Peaceful Means but View Using Physical Means as a Viable Option

There is a common perception among many people that males in movies, television, and books solve all their conflicts, and especially person-against-person conflicts, through immediate physical action. In the books used in this study where person-against-person conflicts play a major role in the plots, a pattern emerged that shows male characters portrayed as people who progress from thought to physical competition. For example, at first, Moon Shadow uses words and wit to resolve conflicts that develop against other people in *Dragonwings* (Yep, 1975, p. 16). Later, as the conflicts become more physical, Moon Shadow tries to walk away and ignore the situation (pp. 30, 55). Moon Shadow soon comes to the realization that to stop those who may harm him, physical competition is a viable option (p. 143). He feels successful after he beats up a White boy and realizes that the White boys are just like the boys back in China, "You only had to punch out the biggest and toughest of the bunch and the others would accept you" (p. 145).

Male Characters Are Portrayed as Resolving Person-Against-Nature and Person-Against-Self Conflicts Through Thought, Reflection, and Help From Others

Males are portrayed as resolving person-against-nature conflicts through thought, reflection, cooperation with others, and time-consuming work. For example, in *Hatchet*, when Brian realizes that an animal may again steal the food that has taken so long to gather, he considers all the possibilities of how to store food before deciding to put it high above his shelter (p. 133). This is

in contrast to many person-against-person conflicts seen in the books, for at no time does Brian even consider resolving his conflict with the skunk who stole his food by having a physical confrontation with the animal in some way.

Studies in the past have said that males are portrayed as independent (Lach & Peterson, 1990), yet my observations were that very often males are portrayed as relying on others for help when resolving the conflicts they face. For example, in *Ramona Quimby, Age 8* (Cleary, 1981), Mr. Quimby counts on his wife to help him through a period in which he struggles with the issue of whether to stay in university or to go back to work. In *The Sign of the Beaver* (Speare, 1983), Matt knows he needs help from the First Nations people in order to learn how to survive and gratefully accepts their assistance. In *River Runners* (Houston, 1979), Andrew looks for help from Pashak to learn how to cope with the hardships living in the north can bring.

The Code of Emotions

Sensitive Feelings and Emotions, While Present, Are To Be Kept to Oneself and Not Verbally Shared Fully With Others

All males are portrayed as having feelings many consider "sensitive" in various ways. By "sensitive" feelings or emotion, I refer to those such as love, fondness, and sadness. Often in the books examined, the males are portrayed as having sensitive feelings about someone or something, but unable or unwilling to fully expose their feelings to others or even themselves. In *Dragonwings* (Yep, 1975), neither Moon Shadow nor Windrider share the full extent of his true feelings for the other. For example, when these two characters meet for the first time after a long absence, Moon Shadow's father gives him a handmade kite. Although it is a special gift both to give and to receive, neither male is portrayed as indicating that this is the case (p. 28). Even the minor male characters with whom Moon Shadow and Windrider interact are portrayed as keeping their true feelings inside, especially the uncles, as is seen when they lose their business after an earthquake.

Uncle supervised the stowing away of his ancient chair and then sat down on it. He turned around to look at the building for one last time. "It's just as well. That old building was too drafty anyway." But he was fighting back the tears. None of us said anything as Hand Clap clicked his tongue and Red Rabbit jerked the wagon forward. (p. 180)

In some of the books studied, there are times when a primary male character cries. It is not seen often, but when it does appear, it is something boys hide or think of as a wasted emotion and men are ashamed of. An example of a boy being able to cry, but finding it a wasted emotion is in *Hatchet* (Paulsen, 1987) when Brian feels he is going to die in an airplane crash.

And he started crying with the screams, crying and slamming his hands against the wheel of the plane, causing it to jerk down, then back up. But again, he heard nothing but the sound of his own sobs in the microphone, his own screams mocking him, coming back into his ears. (p. 18)

The only primary adult male character who is shown crying is Uncle Ob in *Missing May* (Rylant, 1992). When Uncle Ob finally breaks down over the death of his wife of many years, he feels humiliated.

"What is it, Ob?" I asked.

And in that gray cast, that fog in which we both sat, I could see, and feel, that tears were rolling down his face . . .

"You go on back to sleep if you want, Ob. I'll put some coffee on the stove. And I'll fix you some eggs and coca when you get up."

Ob didn't protest. He was humiliated, I knew, and wanted to be left alone. (p. 45)

This example shows that adult males are portrayed as not sharing with others how they really feel when their feelings are of sadness. Previous examples showed that males do not verbally share feelings of love or caring with others. These examples also show, however, that males are portrayed as having these feelings, so studies that have assumed males are not portrayed as having sensitive emotions are mistaken (Fox, 1993). It is the fact that male characters are not able to verbally express to others the full extent of their sensitive feelings that is a key element in their portrayal.

Males Exhibit Nurturant Behavior

Unlike other studies have suggested (Scott, 1981), males are portrayed as nurturant. In *Dragonwings* (Yep, 1975), there is no question that Windrider loves his son a great deal and although he does not verbalize this, he shows it through the stories he tells and the gifts he gives his son. In *Ramona Quimby, Age 8* (Cleary, 1981), Ramona's father often displays his love for his wife and his children. He is very much committed to his family, and enjoys being with his daughters. In *The Sign of the Beaver* (Speare, 1983), Attean's grandfather is very caring. Not only does he exhibit love for his own family, but also cares enough for Matt that he asks Matt to join the First Nations people when they move so that Matt is not left alone. Jake in *Like Jake and Me* (Jukes, 1984) shows that he really does care for and love Alex when he picks him up so that they can dance together. Some of the best examples of males exhibiting nurturant behavior are seen in *Maniac Magee* (Spinelli, 1990). Mr. Grayson cares for and loves Maniac even when they do not really know each other. Also, Maniac looks after various small children as if they are part of his own family. The fact that Maniac is extremely good with small children is an important part of his

portrayal. In *Missing May* (Rylant, 1992), Uncle Ob feels insecure about his abilities to care for Summer, but there is no doubt that he loves Summer and will do anything for her. Males are portrayed as more than just providers for their families, but also as loving, caring fathers, uncles, sons, and friends.

Males may not be portrayed as nurturing in the same way as females, but they are nurturing all the same. Often males have the situation of being a caregiver thrust upon them, and it is then their nurturant behavior is exhibited. It is not portrayed as an inherent quality, but rather one that evolves over time.

The Code of Race

Male Characters Develop Friendship With People of Different Races and This is Acceptable

In four of the eight books examined, male characters develop strong friendships with people of races other than their own. Very rarely does race remain an issue to be dealt with for these characters for a long period of time. It is not that friendships between people of different races are shown as being easy or that there are not difficulties in gaining an understanding of others from a different race, but by the time the friendships are established, race no longer remains a conscious issue.

The primary male characters in *Dragonwings* (Yep, 1975) are Chinese and they make very good friends with two White females. The fact that they are females is never an issue, but in the beginning there is the possibility that the racial difference will stop Moon Shadow from becoming friends with the woman and the girl:

"You'd think," I grumbled, "that we were visiting the Empress herself."

Father wet his towel in the pail and began to wash his face. "Your mother was always polite to everyone. She always said that you never knew if that person might have been some king or queen in a former life."

"But these are white demons," I protested. . . .

I think that the demoness had been waiting for us, because Father had no sooner knocked once than she opened the door. She was the first demoness that I had ever seen this close up, and I stared. I had expected her to be ten feet tall with blue skin and to have a face covered with warts and ear lobes that hung all the way down to her knees so that her ear lobes would bounce off the knees when she walked. And she might have a potbelly shiny as a mirror, and big sacs of flesh for breasts, and maybe she would only be wearing a loin cloth. (Yep, 1975, pp. 100-101)

After Moon Shadow and Windrider get to know these White females, they realize that coming from the White race does not prevent them from being kind and good people. However, in the course of their friendships, the issue of race is never discussed.

In *Maniac Magee* (Spinelli, 1990), Maniac is portrayed as a person who tries to come to an

understanding of why people judge others based on race and skin color. Maniac himself is friends with many Blacks and Whites, and questions the whole idea of classifying people by their race:

For the life of him, he couldn't figure why these East Enders called themselves black. He kept looking and looking, and the colors he found were gingersnap and light fudge and dark fudge and acorn and butter rum and cinnamon and burnt orange. But never licorice, which, to him, was real black. (p. 51)

Maniac kept trying, but he still couldn't see it, this color business. He didn't figure he was white any more than the East Enders were black. He looked himself over pretty hard and came up with at least seven different shades and colors right on his own skin, not one of them being what he would call white (except for his eyeballs, which weren't any whiter than the eyeballs of the kids in the East End). (p. 58)

It is Assumed that People of a Certain Race Have Knowledge Unique to Their Heritage

In the books that have characters of different races, primary male characters assume groups of people have knowledge particular to their race; that is, it is assumed people of one particular race possess a knowledge base that is inherent to that race.

Both *River Runners* (Houston, 1979) and *The Sign of the Beaver* (Speare, 1983) show First Nations people as having great knowledge about how to be at one with nature. They know how to make the best clothes for the elements and how to be part of the land. The White people in these books have an ability to learn very quickly from others. Whereas the First Nations people are unable to adapt to others' ways, White people are depicted as being able to adapt very quickly and easily.

Male Characters Who Are a Different Race Than the Protagonist Are Often Stereotyped Individuals

In both *River Runners* (Houston, 1979) and *The Sign of the Beaver* (Speare, 1983) the primary male characters who are White see the First Nation People as positive, but their perceptions of these people are stereotyped all the same. In both books, First Nations People are seen to be at one with nature, very wise in the ways of living off the land, and always wanting to stay with their own people. In each book, First Nations People are portrayed as teachers and we are able to see through them where European settlers have gone wrong. Their knowledge is trivialized into something that they are born with rather than learned through hard work. An example of portraying someone of a different race than the protagonist as a stereotype is seen in *River Runners* (Houston, 1979) when Andrew was put on a boat with Pashak:

"Aw, don't let him worry you," said Pashak. "Nakasuk here will find the way. Eskimos are at their very best when piloting in heavy ice." (p. 13)

Even descriptions of the First Nations characters conjure up stereotypes, for they are compared to elements found in nature or are seen as somehow unusual since they are not like White people:

He [Pashak] was tall and lean, with a hawklike face burned dark brown by the glaring spring sun. He had large black eyes that moved as quick as any animal's. But when Pashak saw Andrew looking at him, he turned his head away shyly and even drew his sensitive, long-fingered hands up into his loose sleeves. (Houston, 1979, p. 14)

The two boys stared at each other. The Indian boy's black eyes held no expression whatever. Unlike the old man ['there was nothing in the least strange about this man' (p. 26)], he was naked except for a breechcloth held up by a string at his waist. It passed between his legs and hung down like a little apron back and front. His heavy black hair fell straight to his shoulders. (Speare, 1983, p. 28)

The way the First Nations people speak in *River Runners* (Houston, 1979) and even more so in *The Sign of the Beaver* (Speare, 1983) sound like the way old western movies portray First Nations People. Their speech is simple and pidgin-like, even when they are speaking to each other and not to someone who speaks only English:

"Packmen coming on the river! Dogs pulling two toboggans!" Mium-scum heard the sharp-eyed children warning him through the smoke-stained tent walls. "They come in secret without dog bells. They are true men, our men, coming up the river. See how their snowshoe trail curves in toward our camp." (Houston, 1979, p. 59)

"White boy know signs?" he asked.

Matt was puzzled.

"White boy read what white man write here?"

"Yes," Matt admitted. "I can read it."

For a long moment the Indian studied the book. Then, astonishingly, that rare white smile flashed.

"Good," he grunted. "Saknis make treaty."

"A treaty?" Matt was even more puzzled.

"Nkweniss hunt. Bring white boy bird and rabbit. White boy teach Attean white man's signs."

(Speare, 1983, p. 30)

In *The Sign of the Beaver* (Speare, 1983), Attean sees White people as stereotypes. From the way their boots are made to the way White people treat the land, Attean sees all White people as the same. He views them as people who are "book smart" but have no respect for or knowledge of how to work in harmony with nature. Attean is never portrayed as noticing how Matt lives a lifestyle similar to a First Nations person when he is on his own or how Matt is different from the White people his family had come into contact with in the past.

The Code of Relationships

Males Do Not Form Friendships Based on the Gender of the Person

In four of the eight books, the "best friends" of the primary male characters are of the opposite sex. In *Dragonwings* (Yep, 1975), Moon Shadow and Windrider both are very good friends with Mrs. Whitlaw and Robin, the "demonesses" who live next door. There is no consideration given to the fact that these two people are female, which shows that gender is not an issue for these males when forming friendships. Howie is Ramona's best friend in *Ramona Quimby, Age 8* (Cleary, 1981), and even Danny seems to be becoming a good friend of hers. Ramona is not shown to have many friends, but the ones she does have are male. In *Maniac Magee* (Spinelli, 1990), the first person who is shown to be a good friend of Maniac's is Amanda, and this friendship lasts throughout the story. From the first time they meet, Maniac is not afraid or ashamed to open up to Amanda about his love of reading (p. 13). In *Missing May* (Rylant, 1992), Summer is Cletus' only friend. Although he is seen as a bit strange in Summer's eyes, they are friends by the end of the story. As Uncle Ob explains why he wants Cletus to travel to Putnam County, he says, "Cletus is a boy just full of curiosity about the world, and . . . him and Summer, they get on real good, they're practically best friends" (p. 63).

One thing that needs to be noted is that although males do have friendships both with females and other males, the activities they do with females are different than those activities done with other males. With their female friends, males play with smaller children, read, and do other "feminine" activities. Males are more likely to do more "masculine" activities with their male friends such as hunting, playing baseball, and fishing.

When a Male Character Experiences Sexual Love, It Is Heterosexual Love

One feature that remains constant throughout the novels is that any form of sexual love is heterosexual. This love is either shown through the make up of the couples or references to others in a sexual way. All couples to which boy and girl characters are exposed are limited to heterosexual relationships. Although many characters in the novels are adolescents, not one of them questions sexuality in any way. This gives the impression that the only viable and natural form of sexual love is heterosexual love, for this is the only type portrayed in the books analyzed.

Romantic Love Is an Inevitable Process that Only Forms in the Adult Years of a Male Character's Life

In all of the books examined, there is no sign of romantic or sexual love involving anybody other than the adults. The closest thing mentioned to young people having romantic feelings for another are in *Ramona Quimby, Age 8* (Cleary, 1981) when there are subtle overtones that Ramona has a crush on Dennis, in *Maniac Magee* (Spinelli, 1990) when Amanda's mother teases Amanda about liking Maniac, and in *Missing May* (Rylant, 1992) when Cletus' mother hints that Cletus has a crush on Summer. In none of the books are children or adolescents portrayed as people who think about, question, have any sort of relationships with another person other than in a familial or friendly way. Even boys as old as fifteen do not mention the desire to be in a romantic relationship with another person.

None of the books have child or juvenile male characters who are developing "a crush" on another person. However, except for one character, every adult male is shown to be involved with a female in a romantic relationship. The differentiating factor is that some of these relationships are romantic and positive (*River Runners, Ramona Quimby, Age 8, Like Jake and Me, Missing May*), difficult (*Hatchet, Maniac Magee*), or neutral (*Dragonwings, The Sign of the Beaver, Maniac Magee*). Only one adult male in all of these books is shown to be a bachelor and not searching for romance.

Male Characters Are Portrayed as Part of Families Which Vary in Composition

In *Ramona Quimby, Age 8* (Cleary, 1981) and *The Sign of the Beaver* (Speare, 1983) there are the very traditional families of father, mother, and two children. These are the only books of the eight in this study that have this type of family all living together at once. The family in *Like Jake and Me* (Jukes, 1984) is traditional in that Alex lives with a mother and father. What makes it nontraditional is that Jake is not Alex's biological father, but rather a stepfather who is having a child with Alex's mother. Brian comes from a traditional family, but his family dynamic is changing in *Hatchet* (Paulsen, 1987). He tries to figure out where he belongs now that his parents have separated. The plane Brian is on when the accident happens is on its way to take him to his father's house for the holidays, an experience Brian is trying to come to terms with. Family life for Maniac in *Maniac Magee* (Spinelli, 1990) is anything but traditional. His parents are killed in a trolley accident and he is left an orphan to be raised by his relatives. Unable to cope with the fighting that goes on in the household, he soon runs away from his aunt and uncle's house. Maniac becomes a part of other families but the closest thing he feels to actually belonging to a family is when he meets Grayson and they set up house together. Grayson is an older man who has never been married and has no children. By the end of the story, Maniac becomes part of

Amanda Beale's family--a traditional Black family. In *Missing May* (Rylant, 1992), Uncle Ob's family is made up of his wife, May, and his niece, Summer, who comes to live with them after her parents die. Cletus' family is more traditional in its make up for he lives with his mother and his father.

Males are portrayed as members of families made up of varying compositions, yet none of the primary male characters or the people in their families is other than "normal" in intelligence or physical appearance. There is no mention of physically or mentally handicapped, over or underweight, or physically disfigured characters who are part of any family.

The Adult Male Characters' Roles Within their Families Are Defined By Gender, the Male Children Characters' Roles Are Not

Although the make up of the families themselves is varied, the roles adult males play within the families are defined by gender. Roles change based on the age of the character, for male children's roles are not strongly defined by gender. Adult males do jobs within the family that are traditionally thought of as "man's work" as opposed to "women's work." Men provide a house and food for the families, work a regular, steady job, and do not partake in household duties when there is a wife who lives at home. Also, the occupations they hold are well paying and/or traditional "male" jobs. Boys, on the other hand, are portrayed as people who do both "women's work" and "men's work." They clean up around the house and look after children as part of their daily routines. Due to a lack of evidence, it is hard to decide if the boys would do this work were there a female at home full-time to look after the family.

In *Like Jake and Me* (Jukes, 1984), Jake's role is defined by gender. This is in contrast to Alex's role, for Alex is a young child who is trying to find out what his role as a male is. He enjoys dancing, and is given the freedom to express this through play. In fact, Alex is not allowed to partake in the "male" activities of cutting and hauling wood with his stepfather. Jake, on the other hand is shown as the provider for his pregnant wife. It is his role to chop and carry wood, but he does not have to look after Alex.

In *Maniac Magee* (Spinelli, 1990), Maniac lives with various families. Maniac is shown not to fill the roles usually associated with males when he is in a family. This can be seen when he lives with the Beales:

He [Maniac] played with the little ones and read them stories and taught them things. He took Bow Wow out for runs and he did the dishes without anybody asking. (Which made Amanda feel guilty, so she started to dry.) . . . He carried out the trash, mowed the grass, cleaned up his own spills, turned out lights, put the cap back on the toothpaste tube, flushed the toilet, and--Mrs. Beale called it "the miracle on Sycamore Street"--he kept his room neat. (pp. 45-46)

Maniac's nontraditional role in a family is also reflected in his dealings with the McNab boys. When he lives at their house, he soon takes over the duties of looking after the young boys and even wonders, "How could he act as a father to these boys when he himself ached to be somebody's son?" (p. 155). In comparison, every time that Maniac eats dinner at a "traditional family's" house, the adult male character of the father sits at the table after a day of work to be served by the wife and mother of the family. Mr. Beale, Amanda's father, works at a tire factory to support his family while Mrs. Beale stays home to care for the children. When Mr. Beale gets home from work, his wife serves the dinner. Men such as Grayson do stereotypical "woman's work" such as decorating, but as with all of the books examined, this is only seen in families without a wife.

The Code of Success

Male Characters Are Usually Successful in Most Areas

It is undeniable that the males are portrayed as successful. What is meant by "male characters are usually successful in most areas" is that these boys and men experience success even if it is not something they are working towards. They are successful in the events that unfolded in the stories. This can be seen in all the books examined to a certain degree.

In *Dragonwings* (Yep, 1975) Moon Shadow is successful in living in a new country. He has a good relationship with a father he has not seen for seven years, defends himself against those who would hurt him, and takes care of his father's needs. Windrider is successful in protecting himself and his son from violence and keeping his dignity in trying times. Both Andrew and Pashak are successful in their quest to travel across the wilderness, finding food to eat, surviving after their boat overturns in a swift river, and proving that they are able to handle tough work in *River Runners* (Houston, 1979). Although others in the novels face difficulties and even starve to death, these boys are successful in everything they do. In *Ramona Quimby, Age 8* (Cleary, 1981), Mr. Quimby is successful in the raising of his children and showing Ramona and her sister not to take advantage of what they have. Matt is successful in surviving alone for an extended period in *The Sign of the Beaver* (Speare, 1983). He successfully learns how to speak some Beaver language, keep house, and protect himself. In *Like Jake and Me* (Jukes, 1984) Alex is successful in discovering that "a real man" can dance and that even a real cowboy is afraid of spiders. Jake is successful in establishing a positive relationship with his stepson without really seeming to have to try. Throughout *Hatchet* (Paulsen, 1987) Brian is successful in surviving very difficult situations. He lands a plane without hurting himself, discovers how to build a fire, builds a hut, and in the end is rescued. Maniac is successful in changing people's lives for the better in *Maniac Magee*

(Spinelli, 1990). He shows the Black people in his life that the lines between Black and White people are to be crossed and he shows the White people in his life that Black people are similar to themselves. On a more literal level, he is successful in academics even though he did not go to school, in football, baseball, and running, and even wins a contest for untying a knot that nobody else can untie. In *Missing May* (Rylant, 1992), Uncle Ob and Cletus are unsuccessful in their attempt to find a person to contact the spirit of May, but the journey itself leads to success for them in other ways. Uncle Ob is successful in realizing that life goes on for those who are living and that it is within himself to continue to be strong even after his wife has passed away. Cletus is successful in making two friends, which appears to be something he has never had before. Both males gain an inner strength that they did not have at the beginning of the story.

Male Characters Value the Processes That Lead to the Success More Than the Success Itself

It is not so much what the male character finally does, but his attempts at making something work that are measured as worthy. This can be seen repeatedly in many of the books. This is not to say that success is not important to the characters, but rather that something more than the final product is important in the end.

It is not learning how to snowshoe or keeping up with other, more experienced travelers that is of the most importance to Andrew in *River Runners* (Houston, 1979). It is the satisfaction he gets out of knowing he can survive in the north. By the end of his adventure, Andrew knows that he has grown in ways he never could have predicted. "Andrew raised up his arms in joy. He felt as though he, too, had become a part of everything upon this earth" (p. 142).

Diverse Portrayals

In summary, the analysis of Newbery Award and Honorable Mention and Canadian Library Association of the Year Award winners has shown that male characters are not portrayed as narrowly as some studies in the past would have one believe. There are no discrete behavioral characteristics that I found to be constant for all the male characters, even when men and boys were looked at separately. There are characters who behave aggressively, others who are passive, and even more who show a combination of these traits. There are also characters who are sexist, others who are non-sexist, and others who display sexist behaviors in some circumstances, but not in others. This indicates that males are portrayed as people who exhibit an array of characteristics, making them multidimensional. Based on the data collected from the eight books used in this study, the ways males are portrayed in realistic juvenile fiction would in all likelihood be seen as positive by many people, especially by those males who reflect the qualities seen in the characters.

The descriptors I refer to as "positive" are "successful," "loving," "nurturing," "hard working," and "kind."

Conclusion

English education in Japan is changing. Now more than ever, teachers are using newspapers, novels, and short stories in their classrooms. There are also more textbooks from which to choose. It is important that teachers take the time and effort to select materials that portray males and females in different lights. This means that the teacher must attempt to provide materials which have characters whose actions reflect reality. For example, characters' actions need to show that sensitivity is no more uncommon for males than for females or that strength is not a trait that only males have. The difficulty is to find good literature that have these types of characters without these characteristics being the focus of the story. What is needed is to provide students with materials that present a variety of characteristics, so that masculinity and femininity can be seen as multi-dimensional, rather than as stereotyped roles.

If a language teacher does believe that more than "conversation skills," "grammar rules," or "entertaining stories" are transmitted to students as they read, then it is important he or she takes the time to consider the content of the stories he or she is presenting to the students as they relate to gender, race, and so on. This means looking at the features such as the ways characters are portrayed in novels and the dialogue exchanges in conversation books. Analyzing material by using the codes identified in my study is one way for teachers to start finding materials that have a broad portrayal of males and females. Using the five codes, one can examine realistic juvenile fiction to see if there are characters who show an array of emotions, resolve person-against-person conflicts through peaceful means, have racial minorities, are involved in various types of relationships with different types of people, and deal with unsuccessful experiences. It may be a great deal of work for the teacher, but if it helps narrow the gap of gender inequalities and expand the acceptance of all types of people, it will be well worth the work. This is especially important in ESL and EFL classrooms, for cultural as well as gender ideas are being presented to the students.

Looking at various materials using the codes identified in my study will show the reader what is there, but also what is not there. For example, if a teacher does not see the code of race being evident in any of his or her materials, perhaps there are important messages not being delivered to students. The absence of various types of races, emotions, and behaviors acts only to further entrench the status quo, making students who do not fit the "norm" feel isolated and alone.

As a teacher of English, I feel it is extremely important that we allow students to obtain the skill of critically examining characters found in books. Students need to question why characters are shown the way they are, discuss how characters are portrayed and in what ways they feel characters are realistic or idealistic. Students need to be taught how to examine a character to find

what is there, what is missing, and how this portrayal affects the reader and society.

One of the outcomes of my study was my realization that it is not possible to put distinct labels on characters in children's literature. This affects researchers and teachers alike, for I feel that gone are the times we can make sweeping statements such as "Males are portrayed as aggressive" or "Males are shown as being in control of their situations," for they are only true in specific situations. For a more realistic picture of the way characters are portrayed in any reading material, teachers will need to turn to qualitative methods of research and allow for a broad range of interpretations from students. This will allow for the whole character to be analyzed rather than discrete sections of a character's persona. One reason that the books I used show a broad portrayal of males is that they had been given awards, and part of the selection for the Newbery Award, Honorable Mention and/or Canadian Library Association Book of the Year books deals with character development. The materials that are used in Japan for teaching English have not been as scrutinized in this area. Therefore, it is up to individual teachers to find which materials give broad portrayals in the area of gender.

I was silently hoping that the results of my study would show males are being presented in stereotyped and narrow ways in children's literature (in the hopes of locating where our perceptions of "male" originates). Instead they suggest that it is the way the books are presented in combination with what characteristics are being emphasized, that help shape the way students perceive gender. When we teach English, there are more than words transmitted to the students. They also need to realize that there is the option to focus on the non-traditional aspects of the male characters if they so wish. I feel that this is essential for starting to making a positive change in society. Whether teaching conversation, grammar, or a course in English literature, teachers need to be conscious of the various messages they are presenting to students, and therefore must critically examine all features of the characters portrayed in the English materials used in class and be aware of how they are presenting the material.

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THE "PARFAIT EFFECT": IMPLICATIONS OF A TRACKING SYSTEM ON PERCEPTIONS OF MALE ADOLESCENT LANGUAGE LEARNERS

Amy D. Yamashiro

A hypothetical portrait drawn from observation and experience of a typical co-educational English as a foreign language (EFL) classroom at the secondary or post-secondary level:

A Communicative-English Teacher's Perspective

Enter class, greet students, and proceed through the lesson only in English as much as possible. Have students open their textbook and/or distribute handouts. Give instructions orally. Ask for questions, if none, have students work together in pairs or small groups. Scold students who speak in Japanese. While walking around the room to monitor, some students ask questions about what they are supposed to do. After a brief explanation to the individual group, return to the front to repeat explanation to the whole class again. Some groups of boys are starting to act up by talking louder, playing with their materials, or putting their heads down. Scold students, mainly boys, who are being disruptive to other students. During the next round of monitoring, ask the groups of girls if they have any questions, answer if they do, if not let them continue to work together to finish. Some boys are moving around the room without permission, but with the assignment in their hands. Some are checking their answers, but many are copying the answers directly from another student's paper. Scold students and warn them of the penalties for cheating. Tell students the homework assignment, ask for questions, a few boys ask questions to clarify, but some others who were not paying attention earlier ask to hear the whole assignment again. Dismiss class. Many of the students rush out. The "better" students, usually girls and a few boys, stay to ask more questions about the homework assignment.

A Lower-Proficiency Male Student's (LPMS) Perspective

The teacher comes in, briefly greets the class and chats with some of the students in the front. Then, the teacher opens the book and/or passes out some papers and begins talking in English. The teacher asks for questions, but since it was not fully understood, turn to a nearby friend to find out what the teacher said. After being scolded for talking in Japanese, do one of the following: try to do the lesson anyway, copy a friend's paper since you cannot ask for help, or do not even try to do the lesson at all since you do not understand what to do and cannot ask for help. The teacher is talking again about the lesson, and then scolds the students who are talking, playing with their pens and papers, or sleeping. The teacher is talking in a friendly manner with the girls, but then scolds the boys who are busy copying the answers. The teacher looks angry. Then, the teacher tells the class about the homework. Class is over. Other students are staying to ask the teacher more questions. Think about asking them later.

Introduction

The purpose of this paper is to focus attention on the perceptions, of how the lower-proficiency male students (LPMS) in a private secondary school can learn a second language effectively. I will look at the learners in the classroom setting from four different perspectives: the students' self-perceptions, the perceptions of their peers, their teachers, and my own as an observer. I have collected information through classroom observation, questionnaires completed by both teachers and students, interviews with students, and informal discussions with their teachers.

I have chosen to focus on the male learner, partly due to my personal experience as a lower-proficiency Japanese language learner, and because I have noticed layers forming at my school from tracking the students by proficiency. The visual appearance of these layers may be referred to as the "parfait effect," a tendency for groups of students to be clustered in apparent layers, such as by socio-economic status, race, or, as in this case, by gender. Boys range from exemplary to failing--providing the whipped cream at the top to the chocolate sauce at the bottom--whereas girls tend to span a narrower range from very good to average, perhaps taking the place of the vanilla ice cream in the middle. These layers consist of a few boys at the top, most of the girls clustered in the high-middle, and most of the boys clustered at the bottom.

From my own experience in learning Japanese at a Saturday school for the children of "transferees" (business people who are transferred to overseas worksites), when I was placed into the equivalent of the "gamma" (where "alpha" and "beta" respectively denote advanced and higher-proficiency) class, I can sympathize with the LPMS who simply may not be language learning types. Although I could psychologically dissociate myself from my Japanese class during the school week by doing my best at the American public school, I knew that I was placed in that class because of my lower-proficiency in Japanese since I obviously could not keep up with the other regularly tracked students who spoke in Japanese at home. More frightening, I saw first hand, how the "bad" students can rule the roost, if the teachers surrender their authority. Being labeled "bad," some students got the impression that they had full license to be bad. I can still remember how one boy, who was the ringleader, took great pleasure one year in hearing that our teacher decided to quit midyear due to a growing ulcer caused by our class. This combined with the fact that, although individually my classmates and I were basically nice kids and probably good students in our respective American public schools, as time passed there was no escape from the bottom level, so there was not much point in trying anymore. Eventually, I persuaded my mother to allow

me to quit. I realized that the teachers had given up and were just baby-sitting us. It was a poor learning environment, and I felt that it had become a waste of both money and time. Considering the professional ethics of providing students with equal access to an equal education, I think this tracking by proficiency level may go against this code of ethics, if it predisposes teachers, the students themselves, and their peers to label and treat the students in the lower-proficiency classes unequally.

The Layers of the Parfait: Gender Differences in Language Learning

It has been difficult to find research within the realm of EFL that focuses on the well remarked upon differences between boys and girls. Many researchers have focused on the impact of gender discrimination on female language learners (Fujimura-Fanselow, this volume; Holmes, 1994; Oxford, 1994, Sunderland, 1994b; Young, this volume). Classroom observation for this paper supported Holmes (1994) and other researchers who have reported that girls tend to be better behaved and, thus, are likely to receive less teacher attention, because the "bad" boys tend to demand more attention in the form of discipline. The smaller number of boys who are not only well behaved, but also eager to learn, benefit from the greater contrast. In short, if all the girls tend to behave in a similar manner, the few boys who behave well will tend to stand out further above the other boys and by extension over the girls.

I decided to focus on the male students, primarily the "bad" students, to discover if there are possible interventions or alternative perspectives for educators to take when approaching these students. By "bad," I mean, students who are disruptive or have poor study habits, a category readily formed by impressionistic labeling by their teachers. However, many of the lower-proficiency male students may be mistakenly labeled as "troublesome" merely for asking for help from a friend. At a six-year junior and senior high school, this labeling may have disastrous consequences. Even if a student is appropriately labeled at the time as being a "problem," this designation is often announced and discussed by the entire faculty, so that this stigma will usually remain with this student until he/she leaves the school. By focusing on the lower-proficiency male students of English, it is my hope that educators can help to counter these inappropriate labels by searching for insights and possible interventions to prevent these students from making avoidable mistakes and/or losing all hope of learning English.

A Tracking System: Constructing the Parfait

As a teacher at the new Keio Shonan-Fujisawa Jr./Sr. High School campus, I have a participant-observer's inside view into the school, its curriculum, student body, and educational philosophy. The school is affiliated with a highly regarded university, so entrance into the junior and senior high school has become increasingly competitive, because it provides automatic entrance into the university. All the students expect to enter the university provided that they meet the minimum requirements of maintaining a "C" average, so the majority of the students tend to have well-developed study habits and to display higher levels of effort than most students for their age group. The teachers are dedicated to creating a solid English language curriculum, so there is great concern as to why some students, primarily boys, tend to slip through the cracks. This is a particularly important issue for our department, since English is the only subject that is tracked by proficiency, so we are obligated to be more thoughtful about the process and its consequences.

At our school there are only four homeroom classes for each year in the junior high and six within the high school. Students are assigned to these classes each year using computers to evenly distribute students by proficiency for all the required subjects, so that "normal distributions" for grades with the optimal average grade being a low "B." However, since we had a substantial number of returnees, it seemed best to have special returnee classes to maintain their English, so as to neither frustrate them with slower classes nor overwhelm the regular students with instruction at a near-native pace. At the junior high school, the regular students study in their homeroom classes with the returnees pulled out only for their English classes. Class sizes for English average about 30-35 students. Up to now, there has been a general reluctance to track the regular students at the junior high school, since school is still compulsory for this age group.

At the high school, the regular students are further divided into advanced, "alpha," and regular "beta" and "gamma," which respectively denote regular and lower proficiency in English. For all of the other subjects, the students study in their intact homeroom classes. However, in the past two years, "gamma" students have begun saying with increasing frequency, "I'm only a gamma," implying that they just cannot keep up with their "alpha" and "beta" counterparts. Some teachers began to joke about the seemingly lower intelligence of the "gammas," and some threatened students with demotion to the gamma class in order to maintain discipline. Moreover, some teachers even began to reduce their expectations and standards, "I don't think the gammas can handle this reading," "You had better read this passage slower for the gammas" (during recording

for a listening test), "We have to make some easy questions for the gammas" (when making questions for an in-house examination).

The "gammas" consist of mainly well-mannered male students who have a lower-proficiency in English and some medium-proficiency "trouble-makers" who were demoted for their poor behavior or poor study habits. Neither their overall proficiency level nor the attitude of the "trouble-makers" seemed so "bad" to me, when I compared them with the medium- and lower-proficiency "bad" boys at my previous teaching context, the Osaka YMCA International High School (YIHS).

Potential Dangers of a Tracking System

While tracking by proficiency is wide-spread and has obvious advantages for students, educators, and administrators alike, I am arguing that we must remain conscious of the psycho-social consequences, and thus, ensure that adequate explanations of the procedure and rationale for creating such divisions are provided to both the faculty and the student body affected by the tracking. Moreover, this may, in fact, be a form of "reverse" gender discrimination, if the females are given preferential treatment in the language classroom, and leniency or "the benefit of the doubt" during evaluation. In Sunderland's (1994b) article on differential teacher treatment by gender, she reported,

Items to which the Japanese teachers [of English] most frequently responded that they differentiated between male and female students were: being more polite to female students, asking a female student when someone was needed to do a classroom job and, if a male and female student spoke at the same time, usually asking or allowing the female student to continue. (pp. 151-152)

As teachers we must be aware of the implications of our teaching and how we affect, directly and indirectly, the perceptions of our students, in particular the lower-proficiency male students of English. Fujimura-Fanselow (this volume) demonstrates how she helps to transform her female students into active learners in a single-sex setting. However, for teachers in a co-educational context, care should be taken that empowerment of the female students is not be done at the expense of the LPMS. Kameda (1995) points out that despite the appearance of equality in Japanese secondary education, that gender-tracking still persists with respect to college guidance. In other words, a boy and girl with roughly the same grades, the girl may be steered to a less competitive college or department, while the boy is likely to encouraged to aim for the best schools and more prestigious departments.

During informal discussions on how students were evaluated for final grades, some of the male teachers, both native-English speakers and Japanese, have said that they tend to be stricter with the boys and more lenient with the girls. If this is true, this may be causing justified frustration and resentment on the part of the male students. The male language learners may be getting mixed messages, when they receive lower grades despite their apparent advantage in claiming teacher attention in class (Sunderland, 1994b) and in dominating class discussions (Holmes, 1994).

I have begun to think that these arbitrary divisions, which are made mainly to create roughly equal numbers of students in each level, may have counterproductive after effects upon the students, especially if they are sometimes done as a form of "punishment," rather than merely by proficiency. Students who may have been "the best" student at their previous schools, may be discouraged to find that they are placed into the lower-proficiency grouping. This is further exacerbated by the fact that some teachers for the higher-proficiency groupings have demoted the "trouble-makers" into the "gamma" class as a form of discipline.

This made me question the ethics of the tracking system: Does it prejudice the teachers' opinion of the class (thereby lowering their expectation of what the students can do)? Does it unwittingly limit student potential? Does it affect the students' self-esteem?

Identifying the Four Perceptions

In trying to discover what the lower-proficiency male language learner actually thinks of and how he perceives or understands the language learning process in the classroom, I faced the problem of how to identify and categorize the students' self perceptions, as well as those of their peers, their teachers, and mine as the observer. In addition, I wanted to see if there may be some disjunctures among the four perceptions and if they crossed at any point. I focused on the regular Japanese students of English, in particular the lower-proficiency male students. I decided to omit looking at the returnee students, because of their varying backgrounds and living experiences. There were similar trends in the information collected from the regular first-year and third-year junior high and third-year high school students.

I collected data in three parts: observing classroom behavior, having students and teachers complete questionnaires, and interviewing both students and teacher. I constructed a questionnaire (See Appendix A, The Questionnaire) in English and had a colleague add the Japanese translation for each question. The open-ended questions asked students to write what they thought made a good student of English as well as

asking them to identify the "best" student of English and rate each language learner for various English skills. During the interviews, I collected biographical data as well as information about study habits to complement the questionnaire rather than asking for elaboration (See Appendix B, Interview Questions). The interview questions were also open-ended and loosely structured to permit valuable digressions. Each interview averaged to be about 20 minutes. Considering the complex language demands for the younger students and myself, a colleague¹ assisted me by serving as an interpreter while collecting interview data and helped to translate key words from the surveys.

An Observer's Perception

I will focus my discussion of my perspective as observer on the regular third-year junior high school students, because my schedule permitted me to visit the third-year regular class first as a substitute, then as an observer with two different teachers. The lower-proficiency male students tended to form small clusters and cause several minor distractions, such as talking out loud throughout the period. For example, one group of boys kept interrupting the teacher by asking a continuous string of questions about the reading passage, so that she was prevented from giving her complete instructions for the reading task until they finished. Another group of LPMS played catch with a tennis ball, while a few LPMS spent most of the period moving from one desk to another around the classroom. Many of these students were copying answers. In general, teacher intervention was necessary to halt such disruptions.

Some students who were very eager to talk with native English-speaking teachers appeared disinterested in the lesson conducted in Japanese on English grammar. Conversely, other students who were very engaged in the grammar worksheet or the lesson with the male Japanese teacher appeared frustrated at not having enough proficiency in English to ask the female native-speaker detailed questions about the reading task that she had assigned. In a similar fashion, some students looked perplexed by an explanation solely in English of a grammar point from the worksheet.

It is interesting to note that in the classes I observed, the LPMS were more outgoing and willing to speak in English with the "stranger" in their class, although the speaking ability of a few of the students was nearly incoherent and incomprehensible. However, they were highly motivated to communicate. They appeared genuinely

¹I would like to thank John W. McLaughlin for his role as interpreter during the interviews and translator of student responses on the questionnaires

gratified to see that I could understand their questions, as I restated them in simple English for a comprehension check, but they were even more encouraged when they could understand my answers. Because my assessment was solely based upon observable behavior, I tended to nominate more boys as the "best" students. The boys appeared to me to be more engaged during teacher explanations, tended to ask the teachers more questions on both content and procedure, and seemed to have more "presence" during the class activities. By presence, I mean, these boys tended to speak more often, more loudly, and with a higher degree of confidence than the girls.

The Teachers' Perceptions

Having worked at this school for nearly two years, I have developed a good working relationship with my colleagues, who agreed to allow me to observe their classes. In addition, we had many informal discussions about the lessons I observed, about their answers to the questionnaires, and about individual students. The teachers briefed me on their lesson plans, provided me with copies of student handouts, and were very willing to discuss any question or comment arising from the observation.

The teachers also informed me as to how they determined the term-end grades. When I looked at the final grades for each English teacher, I found that the teachers, both native-English speakers and Japanese, by far nominated more girls as the "best" learners. This difference was clearly represented in the students' grade distributions for each of the three teachers: a female native-speaker of English, a female Japanese teacher, and a male Japanese teacher. Each teacher had a higher average for the girls over the boys. The girls averaged roughly one full grade point higher than the boys, so that if the boys averaged 6.9, then the girls averaged about 7.9 out of the ten point scale. One particularly interesting trend in the grade distributions was the presence of a bi-modal distribution for boys, which may support the idea that there are two groups: higher proficiency and lower-proficiency male students. Part of the variation for these grades could be attributed to the skill focus--oral communication, written communication, and content-based instruction--while the other part may be attributed to the individual teachers' styles and approaches.

With respect to active participation, such as in asking questions of the teacher, I tended to be more in agreement about perceptions of student behavior with other native-speaker teachers, both male and female, than with Japanese teachers of English. I think this may be due to a similar tendency on the part of native-English speaker teachers to view student questions or chatter in English, even those unrelated to the task, as practice

and effort. On the other hand, student questions or chatter in Japanese on unrelated topics tended to be seen as more disruptive by the native-English speakers than by the Japanese teachers.

When remarking upon disruptive behavior, one teacher stated, “there are certain students that I have to keep an eye on during the entire class period,” and these students are usually LPMS. Although some of the tactics the LPMS take may be viewed in a positive fashion, such as, “at least they are talking in English,” typically, it is the native-speaker teachers who are more likely to translate that behavior into positive effort and attitude. These attention-getting tactics tend to give the LPMS greater influence over teacher time and attention, or may cause certain teachers to surrender the battle. One stated, “I prefer to simply let that student listen to his CD player, rather than have him disrupt the whole class all period.”

Student-Peer Perceptions

While girls tended only to list other girls as the “best” students of English, only about one-third of the boys included girls in their lists of “best” students, whereas for all teachers, their lists of “best” students were either completely or predominantly (60% or more girls). When I did a simple Chi-square statistical test, I found that overall, the students did not pick girls over boys in a statistically significant fashion ($X^2 = 2.1475$, $df = 6$, ns). I think, this is noteworthy, because it points to a lack of awareness, especially on the part of the lower-proficiency male students, as to what characteristics “good” language learners display in class. In particular, the majority of LPMS listed as “best” a single boy, one whom they liked and respected, the captain of the junior high baseball team. Looking at his grades, I was surprised to find that he was about medium, with an average of about seven for English.

Even though there was a typical gender divide, where girls tended to focus on girls and boys on boys, some of the higher-proficiency boys did nominate some girls as “best” for some English skills. This indicated that the higher-proficiency male students may have a greater awareness as to what a good language learner does to improve her/his English. However, in terms of attitude and effort, girls were nominated in both categories to a significant degree ($X^2 = 4.3428$, $df=1$, $p < .05$).

Students' Self-Perceptions

When looking at the self-evaluation data (See Appendix A, The Questionnaire) to find patterns, one interesting disparity is that the LPMS tended to mark themselves too

low (all ones or twos) or too high (all sixes or sevens) on the Likert scale. On the scale, circling seven indicated that the rater thought the person being rated performed very well, such as speaking in English, very well, whereas circling one meant the rater thought the person needed to do much more to become better for that particular item. The girls and higher-proficiency boys tended to make a more honest and realistic assessment for each skill.

The comments from the LPMS suggest that psycho-social considerations need further investigation, if interventions for the lower-proficiency, primarily male learners are to be found. Some LPMS in the high school appreciate the tracking system saying, "I cannot alpha English," "Gamma is understand for me," "Girls study better English than boys." Conversely, other LPMS have stated, "Why is gamma have no girls," "Tracking is unfair system, we cannot escape gamma class." In truth, they are right. If the classes are taught at different paces, sometimes with different content or textbooks, then it becomes less likely that their teachers will recommend that some of the LPMS be promoted into the higher-level classes with each passing semester and year.

Teacher Strategies for Deconstructing the "Parfait"

I will use McCornick's (this volume) distinctions of teaching: *training* (acquiring skills and forming good habits), *indoctrination* (absorbing ideology without reflection), *schooling* (transmitting culture), and *education* (reaching into the unknown). I will focus on how these distinctions can be used as a guide for educators--when creating lesson plans, designing syllabi, or coordinating curricula--not only to help their students to become better language learners, but also to become actively engaged in the quest for knowledge. Educators, in particular those who teach in the secondary schools or first-year students, can easily manipulate these aspects to enhance their teaching and better prepare students to engage with chaos. In short, borrowing McCornick's terminology, language teachers can provide students with a solid foundation for communication through *training* and *schooling*, but they can also develop students' critical thinking through questioning *indoctrination* (Young, this volume; Hardy, this volume) and transform students (McMahill & Reekie, this volume; Fujimura-Fanselow, this volume) through *education*. If language teachers focus too heavily on communication and language, we risk stopping at *training* and *schooling* and may end up depriving our students of the opportunity to move beyond memorization of facts to the pursuit of knowledge.

Training: Raising Awareness of Learning Strategies and Preferences

On the questionnaires, the girls tended to list more specific strategies, such as writing lists of new vocabulary, talking with English teachers, and reading without a dictionary. In addition, the girls tended to include more concrete ideas--buy study tapes at a book store, read the same text over and over, write in the journal everyday--for studying English than the boys. Nearly half of the boys, primarily the LPMS, wrote question marks, "I don't know," or did not write anything for their answers to the questions about what a "good student" does to improve her/his English. From my experience, overt instruction of study habits, such as keeping and maintaining a notebook, and learning strategies, such as taking notes and summarizing, has helped some LPMS students to become better prepared for class. If the class is conducted entirely in English, something as simple as writing more frequently on the board--instructions, reminders, and key points--has enabled many LPMS to either check with the teacher or a friend about the assignment or activity. Many LPMS have stated that they simply did not know what the native-English speaking teacher wanted them to do, because the English was too fast or difficult. In addition, it was not written, so they did not know what to do. Some LPMS felt frustrated when they were scolded for speaking in Japanese to check with a friend about what to do, and felt embarrassed to ask for help in front of the whole class.

Besides training students to have better skills and study habits, teachers should be aware of individual student learning styles and preferences. The medium and higher-level students reported in their interviews that they liked to read, in either Japanese or English, and shared this pastime with one or both parents. They tended to explain why they preferred certain English teachers by describing the teacher's preparation or procedure, such as, "the teacher often gave advice on how to study," "the teacher had very clear handouts," or "the teacher made us study hard, so we learned a lot." On the other hand, the LPMS tended to be more likely not to read extensively or for pleasure. When asked to explain why they preferred a certain English teacher, they tended to mention personality traits, such as "she was very enthusiastic," "he was very interesting," "he was very gentle and kind."

Schooling: Raising Awareness of Cultural Differences

In Japan, students may not be fully aware of the notion of plagiarism, especially at the secondary level. Several LPMS informed me that they did not understand why teachers got so upset about copying answers, because they thought of it as a sign of camaraderie, respect and trust. In other words, it shows that you esteem the person from

whom you are copying, because you trust that they are correct. Even some of the higher-proficiency students thought that it was an unremarkable practice. An effective approach at our school has been to explain to students across the board that this practice is not acceptable in academia, to warn them of the potential penalty, and to carry out the punishment if they are caught.

In addition, students may not be fully aware of the different expectations each teacher has for "proper" classroom behavior. Moreover, a single teacher may inadvertently send mixed-messages as to what constitutes appropriate behavior, unless he/she is careful to provide clear frames of reference for the students. For example, students may be confused to be scolded for talking with a friend one moment, then encouraged to talk with the same friend in the next. However, with additional framing, the student who is talking to a friend during a listening activity could be reminded that it is disruptive to the other students, and that he/she will have time to check his/her comprehension and discuss the main points when the listening passage is over. Unlike other subjects in Japan, where rote memorization of discrete units of knowledge is often employed, language learning requires using the target language for communication, then as a tool for acquiring knowledge or reaching into the unknown.

Questioning *Indoctrination*: Deconstructing the Parfait

The following anecdote reveals how mere labeling can deeply influence lower-proficiency male students' self-perceptions, and how teacher intervention can help students to overcome the resulting constrictive perceptions. Last year, the regular second-year high school students were divided into two equal sections, "beta" and "gamma." In that particular case, "gamma" was just used for convenience and consistency, not to designate a lower level. By contrast, for the first and third-year high school classes "gamma" did represent a lower-proficiency class. This distinction led to an important observation on student self-perception and how a teacher could intervene to raise student self-esteem.

Throughout the year, the other teacher and I treated the second-year high school "beta" and "gamma" classes as equal in proficiency using the same material, activities, and quizzes. However, we noticed that a gap was emerging between the average scores on identical tests and was continuing to widen between the two classes as the year progressed. The "gamma" students began saying to their homeroom and English teachers with increasing frequency and a sigh, "I'm only a gamma," implying that they just could not keep up with their "beta" counterparts. The other teacher and I kept trying

to tell the students that "gamma" and "beta" were equal, but to no avail. However, the most distressing aspect was that the LPMS began internalizing "their place" in the hierarchy, "I'm sorry. I didn't do better, because I'm stupid."

However, teacher intervention helped some lower-proficiency male students to become better language learners. For example, explicit training of study habits and schooling of appropriate classroom behavior helped some of the lower-proficiency male students to begin questioning indoctrination, so that they could alter the cross-perceptions on their language learning behavior. Other LPMS responded to simple teacher encouragement, such as "No, you are NOT stupid, you just need to study more or try harder." "I know you can do it." As mentioned earlier, the LPMS tended to be more responsive to the teacher's personality, so by being friendly, learning their names, and showing interest in them as people, the teacher can become more human and approachable for help. These teacher strategies have helped some lower-proficiency male students, which led to some being promoted and a few others earning "A's" this year with their current teachers of English.

Education for Transformation: Raising Awareness of Possibilities

I share Fujimura-Fanselow's (this volume) perspective on transformative education, in which the teacher meets, channels, and develops student potential. I agree with Pierce (1989) who introduced the "pedagogy of possibility," to second/foreign language educators by explaining, "that teaching, like language, is not a neutral practice. Teachers, whether consciously or not, help to organize the way students perceive themselves and the world" (p. 408). I believe that teachers, directly in the class and indirectly through planning their courses, exert considerable influence on the perceptions of students, especially on the lower-proficiency male students. While some teachers, look at the various levels of the parfait as regular, accelerated, and advanced; others may view the same levels as remedial, basic, and standard. Depending on the teacher's perspective, the lower-proficiency students could be viewed somewhat "neutrally" as "regular;" however, in the latter case, the negative connotations are implicit in the labels for "remedial" and "basic."

In her discussion on how poststructuralist theory of language can affect the teaching of EFL, Pierce (1989) stated,

Thus, the teaching of English internationally is a discourse--a discourse in which teachers and students take up different subject positions. The nature of the subject positions we take up as teachers will be determined by our perception of the nature of the discourse and our role within it. If we adopt the view that the discourse of English language teaching is implicated in power relations within the classroom, the community, and society at large, we need to reexamine the methodology we adopt in

our English language classrooms, the content from which we draw our lessons, and the learning goals that we set for our students. (p. 407)

She effectively highlights the need for language educators to be aware of the political nature of our decisions. I believe, it is the obligation and responsibility for educators to see and open up possibilities for their students. With adequate preparation and confidence (on the part of both students and their teachers), students of all proficiency levels can rise to a higher standard than previously expected.

Conclusion

Since these lower-proficiency classes tend to be comprised almost entirely or solely of boys, it is imperative to investigate the factors that may contribute to their placement in lower-proficiency classes. As educators we must reflect on our own experiences and observations to be aware of any stereotypes or prejudices that we may hold. Without an adequate understanding of McCornick's distinctions of teaching (this volume), it is easy for educators to limit student potential, if teachers themselves fear the possible "chaos" or if they retreat from presenting "chaos" to their students "for students' sake."

If we as teachers realize the impact and influence we have in creating a learning environment for our students, we can make educated decisions on how to proceed. Consider Barbara Omolade's (1987) discussion of her teaching at a college whose students are mainly African-American women:

No one can teach students to 'see', but an instructor is responsible for providing the coherent ordering of information and content. The classroom process is one of information-sharing in which students learn to generalize their particular life experiences within a community of fellow intellectuals. (p. 39)

I believe that we, as educators, can alter the perceptions of the educational process itself for ourselves and our students. In this way, we can become more open to alternative interpretations or more flexible to make necessary "paradigm shifts" when viewing student behavior in and out of class.

In revisiting the vignette at the beginning of this article, it is my hope, that fresh perspectives can be taken and new approaches for reaching out to the lower-proficiency male students can be generated. As educators, we ourselves must be very careful as to how we perceive our students, their proficiency levels and behaviors, but more than this we must help them to redefine themselves as successful language learners. By doing this,

we will be in a better position to assist the lower-proficiency male students, and thus better serve the entire student population.

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APPENDIX A

The Questionnaire

What Makes a Good Student of English? -- Survey

In this survey, I want to know your thoughts/ideas/opinions on what you think a good student does to learn English well. Think carefully. Try to explain with as much detail as possible and try to give examples of what things a student may do to study English. Please do not talk with other students, while you complete this survey. Remember, these are your opinions. Please answer in English or Japanese.

[Japanese Translation]

1. What do you think a good student does to learn to speak well in English?
[Japanese translation followed each question]
in class

outside of class
2. What do you think a good student will do to listen better in English?
in class
outside of class
3. What do you think a good student does to learn to write well in English?
in class
outside of class
4. What do you think a good student will do to read better in English?
in class
outside of class
5. What do you think a good student does to improve her/his English grammar?
in class
outside of class
6. What do you think a good student will do to improve her/his vocabulary in English?
in class
outside of class
7. How important do you think effort is while learning English?
8. How much, if any, should effort count for the final grade?
9. How important do you think attitude is while learning English?
10. How much, if any, should attitude count for the final grade?

A. Who do you think is the best student for...

	Student No.	or Student Name
speaking . . .	[]	_____
listening . . .	[]	_____
writing . . .	[]	_____
reading . . .	[]	_____
grammar . . .	[]	_____
vocabulary . . .	[]	_____
effort . . .	[]	_____
attitude . . .	[]	_____

- B. How well do you think you study English? Why?
- C. How much time per week do you spend studying English, in and outside of class?
- D. What is your hobby and/or club activity? How much time per week do you spend on it?
- E. Do you have any special talent(s)? What are they?
- F. Who encourages you to study English? Please mention all who do.
- G. Think of your favorite or the best English teacher you have studied with. Why did you choose this teacher? Describe this teacher in as much detail as possible.
- H. Please rank the following subjects. 1=you like it the best, 2=next most liked...

- [] Art
- [] Calligraphy
- [] Computers
- [] English Oral Communication
- [] English Writing
- [] English Content-based
- [] Geography
- [] History
- [] Home Economics
- [] Japanese
- [] Math
- [] Music
- [] Physical Education
- [] Science
- [] Social Studies

On a separate sheet, students rated each student, including him/herself, on the eight criteria listed under question A above on a seven-point Likert scale. The student name, ID number, and photo were provided next to the rating scales.

APPENDIX B

Interview Questions

The following is the basic list of questions asked to each informant. Other questions evolved during the course of each interview, based on the informant's responses.

1.
 - a. Tell me about your family.
 - b. How many people are there?
 - c. Where does/do your sibling(s) go to school?
 - d. What does your father do? Where does he work?
 - e. Where did he go to school? Which university? What was his major?
 - f. What does your mother do?
 - g. Where did your mother go to school? Was it a two or four year college?
 - h. Who likes to read in your family?
 - i. What do you do when you are home?

2.
 - a. What is the most important thing for you to spend time doing?
 - b. What do you do most of your time?

3.
 - a. How well can you study alone?
 - b. Do you need to have someone tell you to study (e.g. your mother)?
 - c. Do you need to study with friends? Which subjects?
 - d. Is English easy or difficult for you? Why?
 - e. What part of English is easiest for you? Which is the most difficult for you?
 - f. Of all the English teachers you have studied with, who do you think is/was the best teacher for you? Why?
 - g. Do you need to study with the teacher, so that you can ask questions (in/outside class)?
 - h. Do you remember to do all of your school work by yourself?
 - i. Do you try to learn new things by yourself? What?

SEXIST LANGUAGE AND TEACHING ENGLISH AS A FOREIGN LANGUAGE

Jacqueline D. Beebe

Introduction

Sexist language becomes an issue for me at the start of every school year when I introduce myself to my classes of Japanese university students as Ms. Beebe, and some students react with surprise or confusion, or think that they are correctly repeating after me when they say "Miss Beebe." The term *Ms.* serves as an example of many of the intricacies that will be addressed in this paper. On the administratively focused first day of school I may simply teach the denotative meaning of one new vocabulary term--*Ms.* is a courtesy title for women analogous to the term *Mr.* used for men. But vocabulary teaching also involves questions of usage and connotation, and *Ms.* is an elusive term; its usage and connotation vary considerably not only in various speech communities in various countries, but according to the known or assumed age, sex, politics, sexual identity, and personal marriage history of both the speaker and the person to whom the term is being applied. Can one truly understand the meaning of *Ms.* without understanding a little of the history and theory behind its coinage and the way in which its rapidly evolving usage has confounded the purpose for which it was coined? Even if a teacher believes that that background is an essential part of the meaning of *Ms.*, and may help the EFL student to use the word skillfully, is a general EFL class, not a course on pragmatics, sociolinguistics, or cross-cultural communication, an appropriate place to explain the history of *Ms.*? Rather than answer that question, in this paper I offer some information on what scholars of the English language are discovering concerning gendered language and I discuss why and how this information has affected my own teaching.

Why Should EFL Teachers Be Concerned With Sexist Language?

This paper will demonstrate that sexist language discriminates, and usually against women rather than men, because it stems from an underlying male-centered attitude that assumes that the male is the norm. Teachers desiring to teach up-to-date English should at least model nonsexist language which meets new publishing guidelines which "treats all people equally and either does not refer to a person's sex at all when it is irrelevant or refers to men and women in symmetrical ways" (Rosalie Maggio, 1992, p. 7). However, some feminists argue that until full equality for women is won, a person's sex will never be irrelevant, and they thus deliberately raise

consciousness of the existence of women and of sexist language by adopting an exclusive *she* to refer to either women or men and by including full name references in their writing (as I do throughout this paper) to highlight the sex of the writer, and likewise, some teachers may also wish to explicitly engage in consciousness-raising in their classrooms.

Why should EFL teachers devote time to keeping themselves informed concerning gendered language and to teaching their students about it? First, because the political element of language can be used to enhance the interest of students and teachers in their classes, especially if they all feel free to express their views and feelings. For classes in which I use textbooks, I myself tend to choose bland conversation textbooks that focus on "survival" daily life English rather than on "issue" content. While I have sparked some lively discussions concerning role expectations with an opinion gap activity on marriage partners, or by rewriting an English textbook's "match-making service questionnaire" to include a question on sexual identity, I do not teach lessons about peace, the environment, the homeless, etc. However, in teaching language as a skill I am also teaching about language, and as a language teacher who is trying to make English come alive for my exam-weary students, I hope that English itself can be seen as an interesting "issue." I agree with H. Douglas Brown (1995, p. 2) that "those of us who teach languages have a special responsibility to subvert attitudes and beliefs and assumptions...that language teaching is neutral, sterile, and inorganic and has nothing to do with political issues." I believe that not only language teaching, but language itself is biased, alive, and political. The existence of sexist language is a great opportunity to introduce some interesting controversy into the classroom. We do not have to search for an interesting "topic" to import into our language classroom if we can show the students that language itself is interesting.

Furthermore, I believe that if I want my students to truly put something of themselves into my classes that I should do the same. I myself, for example, dislike being addressed as either "Miss" or "Mrs." so it is a topic I can speak on out of heartfelt interest. Those teachers who are irritated by nonsexist usages would be free to present the arguments on both sides and encourage their students to hold the fort for patriarchy and/or "proper English." (For a summary of the arguments against the attempt to eradicate sexist usage in English, see Julia Penelope, 1982.) But I hope that teachers taking the conservative view will realize that "political correctness" is not a new obligation for English language users. Groups struggling to gain or maintain power have always attempted to dictate politically correct language. Concern with the social implications of grammar is nothing new; it is just that different constituencies are feeling empowered enough to voice their views. In the sixteenth century English language users were chastised for neglecting to express linguistically the "natural" androcentric social order: "my mother and my father" is incorrect because "the worthier is preferred and set before: As a man is

sette before a woman" (Wilson, 1560, p. 234, cited in Ann Bodine, 1990, p. 171). In 1886, White argued against "incorrect" language in this way:

Properly speaking, a man is not married to a woman, or married with her; nor are a man and a woman married with each other. The woman is married to the man...it is her life that is merged, or supposed to be merged, in his, not his in hers...we do not speak of tying a ship to a boat, but a boat to a ship. And so long, at least, as man is the larger, the stronger, the more individually important...it is the woman who is married to the man. (pp. 139-140, cited in Bodine, 1990, p. 175)

In the nineteenth century a prescriptive campaign started against the long widely-used singular *they*, a campaign still continuing in 1967, when a school grammar told girls and boys in the US that "grammatically, men are more important than women. For reference to mixed groups, we use just the pronoun *he*" (Roberts, 1967, p. 354-355, cited in Bodine, 1990, p. 178).

We teachers who quite likely unconsciously use the singular *they* ourselves (at least if we are native speakers) must realize that when we teach our EFL students to say "somebody forgot his notebook" rather than "somebody forgot their notebook" because after all, that is correct standard English, we are fostering a "doctrine of correctness." Norman Fairclough (1992) explains that "a formulation such as 'language variety x is (not) appropriate in context y' metaphorically expresses a historically specific relationship between <contesting> people as natural and necessary" (p. 51). Teachers who teach standard pseudo-generic grammar without acknowledging how native speakers really use the language project upon the messy and contradictory realities of a sociolinguistic order an idealized and utopian view of what the sociolinguistic order ought to be like from the partisan perspective of a dominant social group" (Fairclough, 1992, p. 51). We should be helping our learners to make informed choices as to how their language will immediately create an impression on their audience and how their language choices also ultimately contribute to the evolution of the English language and possibly to relations between the sexes:

Learners should...have a picture of dominant judgments of when standard English is appropriate, but also of how widely such judgments are shared and followed in practice. And they should be encouraged to develop the ability to use standard English in conventional ways when they judge it to be necessary to do so, because they will be disadvantaged if they do not develop that ability. At the same time, they should be encouraged to see...that they contribute through their own practice to the shaping and reshaping of the sociolinguistic order--to reproducing it or transforming it. And to appreciate the possibility, advantages, and risks of critical, creative and emancipatory...practice as speakers and writers, and as critical readers and listeners. (Fairclough, 1992, p. 54)

The empirical evidence shows that we cannot use English as it now exists neutrally. Whether intentionally or unintentionally, many users of much still-current standard English are

discriminating against women. Sexist language can result in women being excluded, controlled, belittled, stereotyped, or made invisible. Thus my second argument for grappling with sexist language is that ignoring this issue in our classrooms is as much a political choice as addressing the issue. If this sounds as if I am overly concerned with long-term social goals, then for a third argument, imagine the possible personal negative consequences to a student who has studied a presumably up-to-date business English textbook first published by Oxford University Press in 1995 (David Grant and Robert McLarty). This (male) student consults the chart in the book and learns that one opens a business letter to an unknown reader thusly: "Dear Sirs (Brit.) Gentlemen (Am.)" (p. 167). The poor student picks the appropriate opening by country and writes a letter asking for a job. The personnel manager who reads the letter happens to be a woman who gets irritated with this "sexist fool" before she even reads the body of the cover letter. This student may not care whether feminist language planning ultimately succeeds, this student may in fact actually be a male supremacist, but his teachers should have saved him from unwittingly giving offense and presenting an image of himself that he did not intend to convey through his uninformed use of gendered language.

For hundreds of years the English language has been teaching its users that it is appropriate to forget that women exist, and one of the consequences of this is that I often receive mail addressed to Mr. Beebe or that greets me with "Dear Sir." I was recently talking on the phone in English to a customer service representative at my international bank in Tokyo. He had apparently had the formulaic phrase "Thank you for waiting, sir" drilled into him so thoroughly that he had hopelessly fossilized and could not leave off the "sir" even after I told him twice that I was a woman and asked him to stop. (Unfortunately, I did not tell him that he should address me as *ma'am*, so I lost the chance to observe whether simply supplying this information would have immediately solved his problem.) One could argue that it is not the duty of EFL teachers to "cure" their students of sexism. But should we teach a Japanese student who in his first language would use an ungendered courtesy title such as *san* or *sama*, titles which distinguish by neither sex nor marital status, to take up a new sexist practice in English, a practice which may damage the image of himself or his company by alienating a reader or listener?

Finally, sexist language may be contributing to affective learning barriers in EFL classrooms. Imagine the possible negative consequences to a female EFL student who is already being asked to let go of any social-psychological resistance to speaking a foreign language and then must abandon even more of her familiar sense of self-identity when she learns in her grammar lesson that in English she must at times talk as if all humans are males. This may not bother some female students at all, but is it fair to not inform those students who are bothered that in fact there is another common way of speaking (the singular *they*)? (For discussions of pressures to adopt gendered L2 usages see Yoko Tsuruta, this volume, and David Freedman, Yoshiko Takahashi, and Hisun Rim, this volume.)

Does Sexist Language Really Matter and Can it be Eradicated?

Let us return to that famous attempt to deal with sexist language, the term *Ms.*, which addresses the inequality that the marital status of women is given more prominence than that of men, who are free to have an identity in their own right. Even sexists may be grateful for the term *Ms.* when it solves a delicate problem involving addressing or referring to a woman of unknown marital status. However, managed language change is an inexact science, and the coinage of *Ms.*, which was meant to be used symmetrically with *Mr.*, eventually replacing both *Miss* and *Mrs.*, has not stopped institutions from forcing me to choose either *Miss*, *Mrs.* or *Ms.* when I fill out forms, whereas men are only subjected to one irrelevant personal question concerning their biological sex. One could argue that I can avoid the personal question regarding marital status by circling *Ms.*, however *Ms.* is marked with connotations in addition to the denotation "female." After more than twenty years, in some speech communities the term *Ms.* still maintains implications that the woman who bears this title may be divorced, an older unmarried woman, or a "radical" feminist. (Anne Pauwels [1987] discusses the case of Australian English; Donna Atkinson [1987] cited in Susan Ehrlich and Ruth King [1994] reports on Canadian usage.) On the other hand, Donald L. Rubin, Kathryn Greene, and Deidra Schneider (1994) report that "many young language users simply fail to connect language choices with ideological choices" (p. 109) (although their male subjects still used more gender-exclusive terms than the females did), and that among the US college students they studied, use of *Ms.* is habitual and "has only a remote historical connection to feminist concerns" (p. 109).

Ms. is used along with *Mrs.* and *Miss* just as *chairperson* has come to be used for women only and *chairman* still is used for men (Ehrlich & King, 1994). New words cannot change old patterns so easily if enough men and women still insist on knowing or announcing a woman's marital status and if they hesitate to take away from men the special status of being marked as a male by words such as *chairman* and *spokesman*. Deborah Cameron (1992, Chapter Six) discusses a further obstacle to implementing language change--how not only *man* meaning humans, but even a seemingly innocent word like *neighbor* can be used as a pseudo-generic, as in "a neighbor's wife" instead of "a neighbor," a usage which implies that the prototypical neighbor is a man, and that this particular woman is an adjunct to or possession of some more important male.

Morphemic marking by sex takes another insidious form with words ending in *-ess* for social roles or occupations held by women. Rosalie Maggio (1992) explains the problem with "feminine" endings:

Suffixes like *-ess*, *-ette*, and *-trix* do three things. (1) They perpetuate the notion that the male is the norm and the female is a subset, a deviation, a secondary classification. A poet

is defined as "one who writes poetry" while a poetess is defined as "a female poet;" men are thus "the real thing" and women are sort of like them. (2) These endings specify a person's sex when gender is irrelevant. (3) They carry the sense of littleness or cuteness (consider how even nonhuman *-ette* words don't carry much weight: *dinette*, *featurette*, *luncheonette*, *sermonette*). (p. 14)

Janet Holmes (1993, p. 367) reports that these female suffixes "are still declining, though they are clearly not dead." Luckily, before their death they inspired some subversive humor when a lawyer said, "Most men want their wives to have a *jobette*," (quoted by Gloria Steinem, 1995, p. 180).

And then there is *he*, "the pronoun behind which men have been able to hide their claims to universality" (Alastair Pennycook, 1994, p. 175). Even a deliberate campaign over hundreds of years has only somewhat eradicated singular *they* from formal standard written English, not only because *he* offensively ignores females, but because *he* is illogical and can lead to confusion as to whether it refers to people or to males only. I recall an editor hired to correct errors in an English text written by a Japanese man complaining to me of rewriting many pages, including removing pseudo-generic *he*, only to discover on the last page, as the writer mentioned employees' wives, that he really had been writing only about men all along. She wondered whether she should cover for him by also changing *wives* to *spouses* or go back to the start and leave his meaning intact and his sexism exposed.

In the academic literature there is also much psycholinguistic evidence that "generics" are not truly generic in meaning and thus are excluding women (see Jeanette Silveira, 1980). However, replacing *he* with *she or he*, *he or she*, or singular *they* does not keep most readers from imagining a male referent (Fatemeh Khosroshahi, 1981, cited in Ehrlich and King, 1994), so *she* may be a more effective social tool than *s/he* forms, and *she* may offend fewer people than *he* will. Or texts can switch between *he* and *she* in each subsequent sentence. As experimenting continues, the use of the androcentric pronouns *he* and *his* has declined, although less sharply than the use of *man* as a generic noun (Robert L. Cooper, 1984), and alternatives to *he* are much more common than most grammar books would suggest (Bodine, 1990; Miriam Watkins Meyers, 1990).

Beyond interfering with clear communication, pseudo-generic masculine forms also create injustices. Over several hundred years "the ambiguity of the generic masculine has allowed judges to include or exclude women, depending on the climate of the times and their own personal biases" and thus deny rights to women in handing down judicial decisions (Wendy Martyna, 1983, p. 32, citing Marguerite Ritchie's study, 1975). Language influences thought and behavior patterns:

If generic masculines are interpreted by contemporary English speakers as masculine rather than generic...then it is clear miscommunication must routinely be occurring <and>

could quite easily have discriminatory consequences. If, for example, an advertisement uses a job description like *chairman* or *foreman* with subsequent pronominalisation as *he*, and readers of this text interpret the masculine forms as non-generic, qualified women might be discouraged from applying for a given post. An accretion of similar texts might signal to the public at large that certain positions are and always will be occupied by males, thus perpetuating traditional career expectations on the part of both women and men. (Deborah Cameron, 1992, p. 28)

The new words to describe women's experiences that are appearing in English and other languages help to fuel social change. Gloria Steinem (1995) says that they "capture transformations of perception and sometimes of reality itself. Now, we have terms like *sexual harassment* and *battered women*. A few years ago, they were just called *life*" (p. 162). Legal changes and funding decisions have resulted from public discussions of the issues of sexual harassment and domestic violence and the lives of many women and children have thus been improved. Steinem also talks about transformations in the meanings of words:

Before feminism, *work* was largely defined as what men did or would do. Thus, a *working woman* was someone who labored outside the home for money, masculine-style. Though still alarmingly common, the term is being protested, especially by homemakers, who work harder than any other class of workers and are still called people who "don't work." Feminists tend to speak of *work inside the home* or *outside the home*, of *salaried* or *unsalaried* workers. (p. 167)

When the French government classifies married female farmers as "co-farmers" rather than simply as farmers, it negatively affects their legal entitlements (Christine Delphy and Diana Leonard, 1992). However economic studies coming out of institutions such as the United Nations, which influence decisions on the dispersal of millions of dollars, are beginning to include calculations of the actual contribution of female labor.

People may claim that it is petty and pedantic to argue about the way in which *man*, etc. render women invisible. But sometimes such invisibility can lead to death. Discussions on risk factors and infection rates for HIV often use the term *homosexual* instead of *male homosexual*, and thus lesbians are either inaccurately included with either male homosexuals or heterosexuals or are assumed to not exist. The lack of statistics and research on the risks of lesbian sexual behavior can lead to death from AIDS.

What Can EFL Teachers Do?

In 1990 Bronwyn Norton Peirce addressed the TESOL community, saying that

If we as English teachers wish to help our students to gain control over the language that we teach, we need to alert students to the current terrains of struggle that characterize the language and into which the students enter as they learn the language. (p. 110)

Teachers can thus alert students on a piecemeal basis, as sexist discourse arises in classroom materials or the productions of students (or even the unconscious productions of the teacher). For example, a rap song that refers to women as *bitches* might be an occasion to bring up the fact that the English lexicon refers to women as animals, food, or objects more often than it thus refers to men (Muriel R. Schultz, 1990). Or teachers can introduce many of the issues dealt with herein in an entire lesson or unit, using worksheets such as that found below. (I based Part B of this worksheet on the examples of sexist language listed on the back cover of the 1980 edition of Casey Miller and Kate Swift's *The Handbook of Nonsexist Writing for Writers, Editors and Speakers* [1980,1989], a book which provides valuable background reading and an abundance of short examples that simply and clearly illustrate the absurdities of sexist usage.)

Worksheet on Avoiding Sexist Language

Do you know these words? racism sexism ageism classism ableism heterosexism

A. Can you think of a better name for these jobs; one that can be used for either a woman or a man?

businessman mailman fireman policeman fisherman cameraman sportsman
waitress actress stewardess housewife

B. Underline the sexist part of each sentence and explain the problem. Then rewrite the sentence so that it doesn't discriminate against women.

1. Somebody forgot his notebook.
2. A three-year-old may be able to feed and dress himself.
3. The dolphin has his own special navigation system.
4. Man needs the same basic things that animals need--life, food, and access to females.
5. ...an explanation even a housewife can understand.
6. Doctors and their wives often go to expensive restaurants.
7. The author brings out the small boy in all of us.
8. Jim Brown is chairman of the Music Group and Mary is chairperson of the Art Group.
9. In one year the average person can have three colds, one sunburn, twenty headaches, and two hangovers, and still have time to spend 61 hours shaving.
10. Mr. Takahashi and his neighbor's wife took the same bus.
11. TV listing: Powerful lady attorney and confident young lawyer team up to defend a rich executive.
12. With a working wife, a man can refuse a transfer or quit his job.

C. If you have to write a business letter and you don't know the name of the person you are writing to, what greetings can you use? Is "Dear Sir," "Dear Sirs," or "Gentlemen" OK? If you know someone's name but you don't know if they are a woman or a man, how can you start a letter?

D. In English which word order has usually been used for these pairs? (What about in other languages you know?)

husband and wife / wife and husband
he or she / she or he
gentlemen and ladies / ladies and gentlemen

father and mother / mother and father
Mr. and Mrs. Smith / Mrs. and Mr. Smith

E. Delicate words: Native speakers of English often have different ideas about what people should be called or like to be called. Which word we use depends on the sex of the person speaking and the sex of the person being spoken about, if we know the person well, if we are the same sex as that person, how old both of us are, if we are talking about one person or a group of people, how rich the person looks, etc. Who do you imagine might say these words below? Who would they be talking about or talking to? (In other languages you know, from what age are girls called women and boys called men?)

Mr. Ms. Miss Mrs.

boy girl man woman young man young woman lady gentleman

There's a man / girl / etc. at the door.

Listen, you guys! Who is that guy?

Excuse me, miss / ma'am / sir / mister / honey.

What does it mean when a parent says to a young child, Act like a lady or Act like a man?

Why don't parents say Act like a woman?

Why do we often hear Thank you for waiting, everyone or Thank you for waiting, ladies and gentlemen but we don't hear Thank you for waiting, women and men?

(Permission granted to photocopy.)

As my university students were attempting to rewrite the sentences in Part B of the worksheet to eliminate the sexism, I overheard one male student say to another in Japanese, "This isn't important. There's no need to think about this." I quoted him to the whole class and told them that many native speakers agree with his view, but that many others do not, and that more and more publications have guidelines forbidding those sexist forms. Another student, a housewife auditing a university class, laughed appreciatively at the line on the worksheet "...an explanation even a housewife can understand." They were generally quick to spot the sexism but many could not correct the texts until we did a few together. None of my Japanese university students, for example, could recall ever having been taught the useful word spouse. (I also realized that I did not know how to explain why we do not say "Someone forgot one's notebook"!)

Many students, when asked, rated the lesson as interesting and useful. Note that they were finding it interesting to transform sentences by changing singular to plural and search their memories of the English pronoun system. Reading Pennycook's (1994) article on "the politics of pronouns," which includes not only the sexist pronoun *he*, but also questions concerning claims to authority and construction of the Other raised by usages such as "they say that," "you people," and "We don't have poverty like the Third World" (pp. 176-177) makes me imagine other possibilities for interesting grammar reviews for my mixed-ability classes.

How are teachers to find useful current suggestions to offer to students after the students have looked up, searched their memories for, or invented alternatives to sexist usage found in a text or a special worksheet? Because I have not lived in my home country of the USA for seventeen years, I find myself surprised and confused when I come across a term like *waitstaff* or *waitron* in an American magazine and have to decide if the word is being used humorously, or if it is indeed becoming common. At such moments it is of immense help to have a copy of Rosalie Maggio's *The Bias-Free Word Finder: A Dictionary of Nondiscriminatory Language* (1992). I can simply look up *waitress* (p. 279), where Maggio lists several alternatives in order of usefulness: "**waitress** *waiter, server, attendant, table/restaurant server*. Also used in some areas: *wait, waitron, waitperson*. The plural *waitstaff* is being seen more and more." Maggio's book contains not only 5,000 entries with 15,000 alternatives, but also twenty-four pages of writing guidelines. It does not, however tell us how common new terms have become and how uncommon old biased terms have become. Most teachers would probably agree that we no longer need to teach the vocabulary item *poetess*, but at some point will *flight attendant* become dominant enough that learners will not also have to be taught *stewardess*? To obtain this sort of knowledge, even EFL teachers and materials writers not particularly interested in language and gender issues could benefit from a look at articles tracking language change, such as the Holmes article (1993) mentioned earlier.

I wish I could advise my students to simply walk into a bookstore every few years and look up words like *chair* and *chairperson* in the most recent English reference books. However, as Jane Sunderland (1994b) demonstrates in regard to pedagogical grammars, and as Margaret Hennessy (1994) illustrates in regard to three learners' dictionaries, these books are apt to be out of date in the usage they illustrate and unhelpful and even seemingly deliberately misleading on the explanations they offer for various usage options.

Usage explanations provided by teachers should ideally address not only the frequency and connotations of various specific terms, but should also provide some general theoretical insight. The self-definition principle of usage states that "every political or social group has the right to name itself and its own" (Geoffrey Nunberg, 1990, p. 476). Linda Bebout (1995) looks at the evolving meanings and usage of *lady/gentleman, man/woman, girl/boy* and *guy*, and of her Canadian and American respondents' preferences regarding these terms and their perceptions and misperceptions of males' and females' preferences. Maybe we need to arm students with fighting skills: if he calls you "girl" and it strikes you as offensive, try calling him "boy." Leslie Beebe (1994, p. 5) calls such a defensive demand for respect "instrumental rudeness...breaking the politeness rules just enough for people to stop and attend to what you need." But what if it is another woman calling a woman-friend "girl"? The import of some words can change drastically by whether they are being used by an in-group member as a pride-

enhancing way of reclaiming a pejorative word or as an intimacy marker, or by an out-group member as either an unintentional or deliberate insult. A teacher may have better luck with teaching these general rules than with trying to keep totally current on an international language like English. For example, lesbians from Australia report having been upset and confused to hear lesbians from the USA refer to themselves as "dykes" (personal communication).

If we hope that our students will someday use English to communicate with real people and not just for test-taking, then whether or not we introduce a historical political analysis, we should tell our students that current international usage favors avoiding the pseudo-generics even if local tests may still demand pseudo-generic *he*. Teachers must fill in the gaps in their textbooks, teaching students to write *Dear customer, Dear Madam or Sir*, etc., for unknown persons. Our EFL students may be relieved to know that they do not have to guess the sex of foreign names since it is becoming more common to use *Dear Jane/John Doe* rather than *Dear Ms./Mrs./Miss/Mr. Doe*. According to Jill Florent, Kathryn Fuller, Jenny Pugsley, Catherine Walter and Annemarie Young, (1994, p. 118) "both these forms of salutation are considered correct by the major EFL examining bodies."

EFL teachers might do well to warn their students that should they ever work abroad in any of several countries that have laws to encourage equal employment opportunities, sexist language could bring on their company legal charges of discrimination, as has happened to some Japanese companies ("Chapter 6: Recruitment and Status of the Foreign Employee," Robert M. March, 1992). But I wonder if I should warn students that the nonsexist choices may also invite a tirade against "political correctness." Again, I feel at a disadvantage since I do not live in an English-speaking country, and so I wonder if the antifeminist backlash is really as widespread as media reports suggest or if the media is merely sensationalizing the issue at the moment.

If teachers simply raise their own consciousness on language and gender issues they may more often notice when their classroom materials contain questionable terms of address, dialogues with women, or descriptions of women, such as a female politician being described in terms of her physical attributes while her male counterpart is described by his professional status or mental attributes. Students could critically analyze such texts using the guidelines for representing women and men developed by the Women in EFL Materials group found in the chapter by Jill Florent et al. in *Exploring Gender: Questions and Implications for English Language Education* (Sunderland, 1994a) (This book's General Introduction and its section on The English Language also provide an up-to-date and international perspective on issues covered in this paper.)

We teachers should also request that specialized reference books such as those mentioned earlier by Miller and Swift (1989) and by Maggio (1992) be on the reference shelves at our schools, and we should bring along these books whenever we are involved in group writing tasks such as examination writing. Those without one of these books may be able to catch and

solve quite a few problems simply by consulting the seven pages with "Guidelines for Nonsexist Language in APA Journals" contained in the *Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association* (1991), and such guidelines could also be turned into a classroom lesson.

I have found that either one full lesson or several quick comments scattered over a whole school year can do much to raise students' awareness of sexist English. Whether it can change already ingrained habits is another question, so I hope that other teachers will join in. Gendered language is a tricky subject; English is changing quickly and there seem to be no solutions that satisfy everyone, or even all of those in the same political camp. But being honest (and not overly-serious) about this messiness can build bridges in the classroom and empower students; teachers can tell their students that even native speakers worry about pronoun choice and sometimes communicate in a well-meaning way only to be attacked for their vocabulary choice. "As long as language teaching continues to trivialize itself, refusing to explore the cultural and political aspects of language learning, it will have more to do with assimilation than with any notion of empowerment" (Alastair Pennycook, 1990, p. 13). The power that comes from sharing and expanding knowledge can be used to open doors in the hearts, in the minds, and in the outer lives of our students. Gloria Steinem (1995, p. 4) says that "finding language that will allow people to act together while cherishing each other's individuality is probably the most feminist and truly revolutionary function of writers." May this also be the function of foreign language teachers.

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BLIND TO OUR OWN LANGUAGE USE? RAISING SOCIOLINGUISTIC AWARENESS OF FUTURE JSL TEACHERS

Yoko Tsuruta

Disaster in Class

I found my class in Japanese as a second/foreign language (JSL) teaching methodology increasingly becoming a horrible mess when I first introduced, as a topic for discussion, the issue of whether female JSL learners should or should not be trained to use the more feminine expression *o-sato* (sugar) as against *sato*. My students did not seem to perceive that anything was wrong with teaching feminine expressions to female learners or what significance it would have to discuss such an obvious matter in a class in teaching methodology. As for me, I could not understand why they responded to my question so unequivocally and did not even seem to be interested in discussing the topic.

I was utterly baffled and could only end the class fifty-five minutes earlier than scheduled. It was my second year of teaching courses in Japanese teacher training; prior to that I had had experience teaching JSL for fifteen years. My students in the teaching methodology class were teachers-to-be, for the most part, without any teaching experience.

I am aware now, four years later, that my students did not understand the implications of the issue I was raising largely because they viewed the use of feminine expressions to be neutral and also as natural as breathing. They had never thought it could communicate any value. I am also aware that their reactions were quite normal for native speakers of Japanese with no special training in thinking about their own language or observing how it is used in any other way than as a native speaker. I did not realize at the time, however, the significance of the gap between them and myself in terms of experience in consciously thinking about language use.

The Scope of My Article

In Japanese, as in many other languages, women speak differently from men. The differences can be found in various aspects, such as in the tendency on women's part to use a more standard variety than men (Kokuritsu Kokugo Kenkyujo, 1982; Haig, 1990). The use of some honorific forms is another area where women and men show different patterns of linguistic behavior (Kokuritsu Kokugo Kenkyujo, for example. But see also Jorden, 1990 and Ebara, Shima and Reynold-Akiba, 1993, for observations of recent change in the use of such expressions by both sexes of speakers.) Between *sato* (sugar) and its honorifically higher

counterpart *o-sato*, for example, women tend to choose to use the honorific counterpart more than men do in the following two ways.

First, a larger proportion of women than men use exclusively the *o-* counterpart regardless of the situation and a smaller proportion of women than men constantly use exclusively the form without *o-*, although many speakers of both sexes seem to use both forms in different situations. Second, among speakers who do use both forms depending on the situation, women are more likely than men to use the honorific counterpart in a wider range of situations (see, e.g., Ide, 1983).

Such patterns seem to be found not only in the use of nominal forms but more generally, for example, in the choice between *kiree* (pretty) and *o-kiree* (pretty, an honorifically higher form), between *iru* (to be) and *irassharu* (to be, a form honorifically higher), similarly between *kuu* (to eat) and *taberu* and between *taberu* and *itadaku* (to eat, a form honorifically higher).

The differences in the use of those forms between the two sexes are based, not unexpectedly, on social norms pertaining to linguistic behavior for speakers of each sex. Female and male speakers are likely to receive different social sanctions when they make a choice that deviates from the norm. Females can be criticized as not properly "feminine" and males as soundly like a "sissy," in addition to being criticized as "insufficiently polite."

However, whether or not this is a reason why female JSL learners should be taught to use the more honorific forms in situations where the social norms tend to require such use is open to debate. On the one hand are those who hold the opinion that a female learner will benefit from being trained to comply to these norms, as she will thus be more easily accepted by society.

I am opposed to this view on two grounds. First, since not all female native speakers use feminine expressions, introducing only the use, and not the non-use, of those expressions as though it were representative of the behavior of all speakers is misleading, if not deceptive, and will be of disservice to learners. Second, to train learners to adopt only the variety that is based on the particular value that "women should behave according to certain prescriptive rules" is, as Endo (1991) maintains, to impose this particular value on learners.

It is, in my view, for individual learners to decide whether and to what extent they want to use feminine expressions. However, in order for them to be able to make a fortunate decision ("fortunate" here meaning "accurately reflecting their own choice with respect to what they want to communicate in Japanese concerning their femininity and their attitudes towards it"), they need sufficient knowledge and information regarding native speakers' use of such expressions. Therefore, I believe it is the responsibility of JSL teachers to try to provide them with as accurate as possible sociolinguistic information about how female native speakers use and do not use feminine expressions as well as about the social norms and values pertaining to

the use and non-use of such expressions, so that learners can base their decision on this information.

The above is my own view on this issue. Each JSL teacher-to-be obviously needs to think about and formulate her/his own answer to this question as part of her/his professional responsibility. However, I have found it is often very hard for native speaking JSL-teachers-to-be to arrive at an answer on their own. It is in fact often difficult for them to realize that it is an issue that needs to be addressed. This is undoubtedly due in part to the fact that language use is such an unconscious process and the values that underlie it are so deeply internalized that speakers are often unaware of what they themselves are doing with their native language.

In this article I would like to consider some of the difficulties that native speaking teachers-to-be might face in trying to understand the importance of this issue. I shall also present some activities that I have used to help my students overcome such difficulties. I hope that sharing my experience will be of some use for JSL teachers, JSL teachers-to-be, and JSL teacher trainers.

Although the essence of my discussion applies to the training of native speaking JSL teachers of both sexes, I shall limit my discussion to female teachers-to-be, since my experience in teacher training has been limited to female students, some fifty university and junior college students over the course of five years. I also limit my employment of the term *feminine expressions* to refer to honorific expressions, a much smaller range of expressions than is usually referred to by this term.

Native Speakers' Limited Awareness of Language Use

I have found that more than a few students have a fixed idea that every female native speaker of Japanese normally speaks consistently using feminine expressions in Japanese. Some of them persist in claiming this, until they listen to a piece of actual conversation between two female students which I tape-recorded in the university cafeteria. During the ninety-second long conversation not a single word appeared that would be labeled as a feminine expression, as is quite normal in casual speech among female university and college students. One common typical reaction to the recorded evidence of non-use of feminine expressions in casual speech between two young women is the embarrassed surrender: "Oh, *we do* talk without using feminine expressions, don't we?!"

Those with this fixed idea are not cognizant of the fact that only some, not all, Japanese women use feminine expressions, whereas in fact whether and to what extent a woman uses feminine expressions varies considerably according to her age, socio-economic class, her regional dialect, etc. Those students are also unaware that a woman who does use feminine expressions may use them in only some, and not all, situations. She is likely, in fact, to switch

between their use and non-use automatically in different situations, which consist of different participants, different settings, and different topics.

Where, then, does their lack of awareness come from? My sense is that the lack of awareness of one's own linguistic behavior has to do with the process by which native speakers of a language usually acquire the knowledge and skills to be able to behave as a native speaker.

It is not unreasonable to suppose that a female native speaker has learned to use feminine expressions in a way that involves some kind of informal and formal education. She may have been taught by her family or teachers to do so. If she has acquired the use of such expressions through hearing other female members of her family use them, she probably has been corrected by someone when she has failed to use them in the prescribed way, or has at least witnessed someone else being corrected. In other words, she probably has experienced the explicit instruction: "Use a feminine expression."

A native female speaker of Japanese has learned many other abilities much more unconsciously: the skill to distinguish, both in hearing and in production, different syllables; the knowledge to produce an appropriately ill-formed sentence such as *nani-kore?* (which translates as "what is this?" but is generally considered to be a grammatically incorrect sentence) rather than an inappropriately well-formed counterpart such as *kore-wa nan desu ka?* ("What is this?") at a certain moment in her speech as when, for example, shocked by confrontation with something disgusting; the knowledge to choose the grammatically correct endings for verbs and adjectives in different positions in a sentence, to cite just a few examples. Such native speakers' basic linguistic ability, skill, and knowledge, has in most cases been acquired at early stages before formal education begins and to a large extent without explicit teaching and correction. (See Greenbaum [1983/1988] for a similar discussion on English native speakers; acquisition of two types of knowledge.)

It seems to me that a native speaker tends not to be aware of the linguistic behavior that she has learned to perform without explicit teaching and correction. Thus, in response to the question I pose to my students in our first meeting of the class in JSL teaching methodology, "What do you think you are able to do as a native speaker of Japanese?," my students list reading *hiragana*, writing *kanji* (in the "correct" stroke order), and other skills and abilities they have been taught explicitly.

None of the students have listed skills/abilities such as recognizing a very short piece of recorded TV news as TV news rather than as a segment from a talk show; sensing some commonly perceived difference between the word *kiree* (pretty) written in *hiragana* and that in *katakana*; or deciding what is a plausible interpretation of an utterance of a grammatically ambiguous form (for example, between a question or an invitation on hearing *tabenai?* = *lit.* "not eat?"). I would be surprised if a native speaker has acquired such skills/abilities through explicit instruction or correction.

Being unaware of her own linguistic behavior, which she has learned to perform without explicit teaching, a native speaker tends to regard the linguistic behavior she has been explicitly taught to perform as comprising all her linguistic behavior. It is thus not so surprising that most women believe that they in fact consistently use feminine expressions. I think that is how those students in my classes have come to regard the use of feminine expressions as linguistic behavior that all women consistently perform in all situations.

There seems to be one factor, an interesting one to me, that makes it even more understandable that a native speaker would hold this kind of false idea about her own behavior. Whereas females are likely to be given explicit instruction at various times to use feminine expressions, knowledge about when one should (and should not, for that matter) use such expressions is normally acquired unconsciously rather than through direct instruction. It is highly unlikely, I believe, that a female speaker would ever hear the explicit instruction, "Use a feminine expression in such and such situations; don't use it in such and such other situations." She must have learned when to switch between the two alternatives in the course of everyday life. Were she to have misjudged a situation and failed to use a feminine expression, she would probably have been corrected by the simple instruction, "Talk in a feminine manner." (In the case where she has performed behavior that would be characterized by descriptive linguists as "overuse of feminine expressions," on the other hand, she would probably never have been corrected.)

Similarly, handbooks for women on how to use honorific forms, how to talk in a feminine manner in general, how to write refined letters, and so on. Do not normally have sections instructing readers on when they should use the language prescribed in those books. On the whole readers already know when they require the help of such manuals, as for example, when they need to make a formal speech or write a formal letter addressing a certain person.

If they had experienced receiving instruction such as "use feminine expressions in front of people such as A, B and C, but not in conversations with people such as D, E and F," it would have helped my students be more aware of their own behavior of switching between use and non-use of female expressions. In reality, in order for my students to become more aware of this fact, they need to spend a considerable amount of time in an activity that they rarely engage in, namely, close examination about their own language use.

Realizing how they actually use language, however, is not the most difficult part of the procedure my students must necessarily go through before embarking on a meaningful discussion of how to deal with female expressions in JSL teaching. Evidence derived from recorded conversation, which I have mentioned earlier, is an example of an activity that always works very well to help them arrive at this realization. Recording and transcribing their own

spontaneous speech always convinces them even more powerfully. The real difficulty that they (and I, too) have to overcome lies elsewhere.

Prescriptive Attitudes Towards Feminine Expressions

An embarrassed surrender is not the only kind of reaction I get from my students to the recorded evidence of their non-use of feminine expressions. Discontented perplexity is also common: "Of course we talk without using feminine expressions *sometimes*, but that's not *proper* use of Japanese. Certainly, we must teach proper language to foreign learners."

Underlying such a claim, it seems to me, is a view of the non-use of feminine expressions as secondary or deviant behavior. Students often describe their own non-use of such expressions as a shortcoming, employing expressions conveying regret, as in for example, "I neglect to use feminine expressions when I should, unfortunately, and say, for example, *kane* (money), where *o-kane* would be "properly feminine" (*'kane' toka icchau*).

It thus is a formidable task for most young women to realize that use and non-use of feminine expressions are, from a descriptive, as against a prescriptive, point of view, two different, yet equally valid, alternatives available for them to choose from, and that speakers are simply socialized to evaluate their usage more highly than their non-usage. This barrier is considerably more difficult for me to deal with than the lack of awareness on the part of students that I discussed in the previous section. There seems to be no such thing as "evidence" for me to utilize to help my students recognize that their attitude towards the two speech styles is the result of socialization and learning.

I have found, however, that discussions of other linguistic choices about which native speakers likewise tend to be prescriptive can help some students develop an awareness of their attitude and the roots of those attitudes.

Awareness Raising Activities in the Classroom

My students tend to show strong and inflexible prescriptive attitudes in discussions pertaining to (a) written vs. colloquial styles, and (b) generationally older vs. younger speech styles, and they often show equally strong, although less stiff attitudes when we take up the issue of (c) standard and regional dialect varieties of Japanese.

The majority of my students tend to identify the written style (that is marked by the full use of case-indicating particles such as *-e* (to) and *-o* (the objective case indicator) and at the use of uncontracted forms such as *-nakereba* (if not) as against *-nakya* for example, among other features), the speech styles that are used by other generations of native speakers ("traditional style", henceforth), and the standard variety, as the "correct" (*tadashii*) Japanese. On the other

hand, they describe the colloquial style and the speech style used by younger generations ("newer style"), henceforth, characterized by use of shortened and jargon-like expressions, frequent use of the particle *-toka* (for example), and placing phonetic emphasis at the end of every intonational unit within a sentence, as "broken" or "deteriorated" (*midareata*) Japanese. They also regard regional dialect varieties as less "refined," "inferior" forms of Japanese. The styles and dialect variety that my students claim as what ought to be taught in JSL teaching are these "correct" and "superior" ones.

The prescriptive nature of their attitude with respect to these three areas, however, seems sometimes to be slightly more evident to some of my students than is the case with feminine expressions. Some "evidence" can help in the case of written and colloquial styles. An inappropriate use of the written style in informal conversation can sound as "wrong" (by which my students mean "inappropriate") as an inappropriate use of colloquial style in formal writing to many students, although never to all of them. This observation seems to help some of my students realize that different styles are equally valid, and that they differ from one another only in the sense that every style has its own communicative function.

The impact of gradually changing social values and attitudes with respect to Japan's metropolitan centers versus other parts of the country is visible in the case of attitudes regarding standard and regional dialect varieties. Many of my students employ the derogatory word *namatteru* ("with non-standard, therefore inferior accent") to describe the phonetic qualities of a recorded speech by a speaker of some regional dialect, in response to a question I pose in which I pretend to test their phonetic sensitivity. They usually change their attitude, hurriedly and with some indication of a feeling of guilt, when I reveal my real intention behind the question, i.e., to elicit the social values they hold with regard to the dialect that is internalized by most native speakers of the Tokyo dialect.

I have never had more than a few students, in my classes who speak dialects other than the Tokyo one, but the statements by those few, which may express either pride in their dialect or a feeling of embarrassment or shame, always stimulate other members of the class and activate discussion. Even in a class where there aren't such students, at least some students are usually aware of the recent social trend towards giving more recognition to non-central areas and their linguistic cultures, and they volunteer "politically correct" opinions.

Thus, through discussions of written versus colloquial styles and standard and regional varieties, together with some supplementary reading which I provide them on the relevant topics, many of my students gradually come to the realization that the higher evaluation they make of some styles or varieties of speech over others is in fact based on some certain social values and norms that they have internalized, and that every style and variety has, from an objective standpoint, different though equal value.

A different story goes with the prescriptive attitude most students hold about traditional versus newer speech styles. The great majority of my students firmly believe the traditional styles are more "beautiful," "correct," and "better." They insist those are the styles they themselves ought to use and that JSL learners ought to learn, despite the fact that they almost exclusively speak in the newer speech style that they describe as "wrong" in everyday communication.

Finding ways to shake up students and to challenge their beliefs about these issues has been difficult for me. As in the case of feminine expressions, I could find no clear "evidence" with which to shock my students, and, unlike in the case of written vs. colloquial styles, use of older styles in informal speech does not seem to sound "sufficiently inappropriate" to them. This thus used to be an issue as difficult for me to tackle as the use of feminine expressions.

Recently, however, I have been given help from a rather unexpected and unlikely source: the announcement by the Advisory Committee on the Japanese Language (Kokugo Shingikai) that it does not recognize as legitimate the use of the newer potential form (*Ra-nuki-kotoba*, the forms which are one syllable, /ra/, shorter than the traditional counterparts) in official situations (see Dai 20-ki Kokugo Shingikai, 1995).

Through this action by a governmentally-appointed body, for the first time since the use of the newer forms initially began to be noticed (which was about seventy years ago, according to Dai 20-ki Kokugo Shingikai, 1995) and discussed and complained about by ordinary native speakers of all age groups, this issue has become as political as that of standard and regional dialect varieties. Thanks to this development, my discussion with students on the older versus newer styles now functions as effectively as that on the standard versus regional varieties, to help my students shake off their lack of consciousness about the internalized values underlying their prescriptive attitudes.

Discussions on these issues seem to help some students to grasp the fact that the internalization of such value system is the result of a number of factors. Some realize that the fact that many students place higher value on the written rather than the colloquial style can be seen as another example of the effect of conscious biases ingrained in them through education. They discover that the spoken style of Japanese has its own regularity, i.e., its grammar, as well as the written one, and that native speakers are aware of the grammar of the latter only, because it has been explicitly taught to them.

The tendency to rate the standard variety and the traditional speech styles as higher than other dialect varieties and the newer styles may be attributable to another factor. The standard variety and the traditional style comprise the large part of the written style of Japanese and therefore they are likely to be learned through explicit teaching and correction, whereas this is not true in the case of dialect varieties and the spoken style. However, the tendency can be

seen, as some students detect, to have a more deliberate, political origin in certain actions and policies that have been advanced by the political establishment.

For students who have arrived at this realization of the origins of their prescriptive attitudes, especially of the political ones, it seems easy to understand what message a sample of behavior which intentionally deviates from the socially accepted norm may communicate. They at this stage also realize quite easily what message that behavior which complies with standard norms may convey to those who intend to deviate from it.

I have found that different students develop their linguistic consciousness in different ways and at varying speeds. On the whole, however, the majority of my students seem to have become sufficiently cognizant of the point through one or another of the activities mentioned above, by the time I finally bring up the issue of feminine expressions for discussion. They are readily able to make an objective description of the use of those expressions and of their attitudes towards their use and non-use by different speakers in different situations. The ability to do so is obviously a necessary prerequisite for moving on to discuss what they should do with those forms in teaching Japanese as a second/foreign language.

Concluding Remarks

Being a native speaker of Japanese obviously is not necessarily or in every respect an advantage for a JSL teacher or teacher-to-be. It may, for example, hinder her from seeing her own linguistic behavior and her attitudes towards the language, which an observer from another linguistic culture might more easily see. However, this disadvantage is by no means idiosyncratic to native speakers of Japanese. Native speakers of English, for example, have been reported to be equally unconscious of their own use of English and to have equally prescriptive attitudes about different varieties of the language (See Andersson and Trudgill 1990, for example).

This unconsciousness may be, in fact, what makes a person a native speaker of a language. Trying to move out from this more or less natural state of unconsciousness to a fuller consciousness of one's own language use, however, can be valuable for a native speaker, if she wishes to learn what prejudices she has. As Greenbaum (1983/1988) notes, "Prejudices about language impinge on our everyday lives, determining in part our attitudes to individuals and groups. Greater understanding of the nature of language, language variation, and language change will help to eliminate or moderate prejudices" (1988, p. 27).

A conscious awareness of one's use of the native language is not only valuable but necessary if one is going to professionally teach her language as a second/foreign language. Teaching a language she has learned largely unconsciously to someone who must set out to consciously learn the language obviously requires knowledge about its use. A teacher who

remains at the native, unconscious state, naturally, mistakenly believes that what she has been explicitly taught constitutes the totality of the use of the language and that, therefore, that is all she needs to teach to foreign learners. The result is that learners will believe that native speakers use the language in a homogeneous, constant manner. Such a teacher tends to hold another erroneous belief which is that there are "correct" and "incorrect" uses of language (or even "correct" and "incorrect" forms) and, therefore, only the "correct" uses (or forms) of the language are the ones that she should teach. In such a case, learners are likely to believe that a particular use (or form) is the correct alternative for them to choose, when in fact it is merely one of several rich varieties of the language.

I have witnessed some women who have studied Japanese as a second language being criticized (or, praised) as sounding excessively feminine in comparison with female native speakers of the same age and/or as sounding "shockingly more feminine" in Japanese than in their native language. They may well be happy to be described as exceedingly feminine. However, if their speech style is really noticeably odd, if their behavior derives from the mistaken idea that "feminine expressions are the correct forms for female speakers to use," AND if that idea has been introduced to them by a JSL teacher, then I think that teacher ought to be criticized.

Those of us who teach a second/foreign language ought to try to provide our students with the fullest range of information possible about the language and its use, and that is what most learners come to a language class to learn. Deliberately giving learners a prescriptive account of a language under the guise of providing a purely descriptive account is unjustifiable (see also Greenbaum, 1986/1988 and Nakamura, 1993), and doing so unwittingly is unprofessional.

However, it is extremely difficult at best, and often impossible, for individuals by themselves to become cognizant of the process through which native speakers have acquired knowledge to use their language and also come to hold certain attitudes pertaining to language use. I am convinced that helping teachers- to- be develop such an awareness is an essential part of the responsibility of a JSL teacher trainer.

A JSL teacher trainer thus needs to have what may be called linguistic meta-consciousness, i.e., an understanding of the native speakers's unconsciously held set of rules and norms about their own language use and linguistic attitudes. It was, I realize, this linguistic meta-consciousness that I was lacking when my first attempt to encourage my students to discuss the issue of feminine expressions in JSL teaching failed.

I did not know then and still do not know clearly how I moved out from a state of natural unconsciousness (which I am sure I was in when I started JSL teaching) to the more conscious state I am now in. Presumably, my experiences as a JSL teacher and as a woman, interacting

with people from various cultures, have helped me, but the process by which I have become more aware seems to have been highly unconscious.

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**THE PAPER LUNCH:
A TRIALOGUE ON LANGUAGE, GENDER, AND LUNCH**

David Freedman, Yoshiko Takahashi, and Hisun Rim

The Scene

A small, but tasteful restaurant in a suburb of Fujisawa; a sort of Japanese *boite*.

The Characters

Y: A tenured female professor at a Japanese university, middle-ageish, but doesn't look it. Academically active internationally, native speaker of Japanese, has lived in America; culturally and linguistically savvy.

H: A female-graduate student cum visiting lecturer at the same institution. In her late twenties; speaks three languages and rides a bicycle.

D: A male visiting lecturer at the same institution in his early forties; a native Californian with an endless passion for good food and life.

I. The Order

Y: This is one of my favorite places to lunch in Fujisawa.

D: Really? Do they make a passable *vol-au-vent*?

Y: No, but they have nice sandwiches.

H: The bamboo looks lovely on a rainy day. I had a great run from Kamakura to here, and I am starving. Let's order.

Y: Are you ready? Why don't you let me order in Japanese, it will be easier.

D: O.K.

Y: (to a waitress) Sumimasen. *Yasai sandoicchi hitotsu, roast beefu sandoicchi futatsu to kocha hitotsu, kohii futatsu itadakemasudeshouka.*

H: Yoshiko, I am surprised to hear you use such elaborate polite language. I have never heard you use *keigo* before. You sound so humble and polite. You move in and out of *keigo* so naturally. Do you ever feel constrained by using polite language structure?

Y: No. To me, *keigo* is a totally different experience. It is a type of "social performance" and the ability to use it is a measure of person's social competence. It expresses the speaker's feelings and attitudes of respect and consideration towards the interlocutor. It's also used to express feelings of refinement towards people or things involved in the discussion. I don't find that constraining, but enriching. By the way, I know you were born in Korea, how old were you when you went to the U.S. and started learning English?

H: I was about ten. Why do you ask?

Y: Does Korean have a "*keigo*-like" structure?

H: Of course. The Korean language has an even more complex structure which reflects the strict social orders dictated by Confucian ethics. I think my knowledge of Korean linguistic structures affected the way I reacted toward acquiring *keigo* because I knew exactly what was expected of me, socio-linguistically speaking.

D: On the other hand, you, Yoshiko, don't have that view of *keigo*.

Y: Not really. For me, it is a thread of my rich linguistic "tapestries."

H: What do you mean by "rich linguistic tapestries"? Don't you feel frustrated when you can speak so directly to David in English, but you are expected to use *keigo* and indirect forms when you speak Japanese?

Y: I have never felt that way. I feel that exploring different varieties of social linguistic registers is as natural as walking, swimming or sitting. For example, there's *sonkeigo* and *kenjogo* to express your feelings of respect towards a specific listener. *Teineigo* expresses degrees of refinement in a general conversation. All of these registers are mine to manipulate as I see fit.

H: I'm curious as to why you feel that manipulating the honorific language structure is such a "natural" inclination. Especially *kenjogo*, the one register where you have to lower yourself.

Y: When I use a humble form, my linguistic response is almost like an automatic reflex. I respond without thinking what I am trying to say. I enjoy having a rich variety of registers, instead of feeling that I am limited to using a formula for particular situations.

H: This is precisely why I think that it would be interesting to write a paper on polite language usage because when I did witness you using *keigo*, I noticed that it came very naturally to you and saw that you were immersed in rich textures of your social expressions. But I am wondering why I feel differently.

D: Perhaps, the problem lies in the perception of language as a "barrier" to be broken rather than a search for a common style of communication. Language itself is about finding a common ground, isn't it?

H: Maybe, but how do we develop a common style? I feel that because of my background as a "minority woman" in the United States, I developed an acute sense of my public and private identities. I came to realize the discrepancy between people's professed principles and their daily discourse. Consequently I feel it is vitally important for me to make an active effort to resist a break between my identities. So how can there be a "common ground" without a feeling of shared concepts, and how can there be shared concepts if I'm constantly hiding my feelings behind polite structures?

D: Perhaps a "common ground" could be a "safe ground." We are polite to each other without compromising what is essential to ourselves. This is because we recognize our essential respect for each other. And isn't that established by our use of polite registers in our "official" interactions?

H: Well, since I have started working at the university, I've certainly become a little more comfortable with "manipulating" polite language without feeling a threat to my identity. And along that line, I have a friend who's older than me who likes to help me and give me advice on things that I should do and say. I would respond to him with *kashikomarimashita* which is roughly translated as "I understand your respectful presence in my utmost humble manner."

Y: That is an extremely formal expression. I never use that.

H: That is exactly the point. I use it like a joke. It's almost like asking the listener to stop telling me what to do. That's an example of a subversive use of honorific structure, creating "irony" through its built-in formal style.

Y: Did your teachers stress "gender-specific" language usage to you? For example, special particles for women, more polite forms for women?

H: No, of course not. My realization came from what I have observed in interactions here in Japan.

Y: So you learned gender-neutral registers? When did you begin to feel that *keigo* was a "gender biased" structure?

H: What I realized was that while *keigo* is linked to gender, it is also linked to a social hierarchical structure that I felt was pressing on me, and that I felt a need to rebel against. It seemed to me that I was constantly being asked to "manipulate" my own social position by humbling myself or raising the listener's position. I resented the social concepts behind that "manipulation." That someone, especially, but not exclusively, women should have to "lower" themselves in order to sound polite. And yet, it seems so sad that there are so many women who unconsciously use this sort of politeness. That, particularly here in Japan, women's power is granted only through "manipulation." The power, therefore, is never their own, but is granted as a prize for politeness.

Y: "Manipulation" is a pretty loaded term. What do you mean by it?

D: Perhaps all language is in some way "manipulation." By the very nature of language, don't we manipulate? In one of the earliest essays on the nature of language, which is Plato's dialogue "Cratylus," Socrates compares meaning in language to the act of "weaving." He says that we use words to form a personal meaning. Maybe this image is helpful to us if we think of linguistic interaction as individuals attempting to attain your social interest via other people's agenda. We could call it a sort of "negotiation."

H: It is a type of a "social negotiation."

Y: Did you feel that you were expected to use more of this honorific "manipulation," in your term, because you are a woman?

H: I have seen it more in women. A lot of *keigo* doesn't contain any meaning by itself, but takes on meanings as expressions are "layered" in formulaic patterns of social habits and codes. When you encounter a polite expression, you must respond with a polite expression, but I wasn't willing to do so. A polite expression exchange did not seem to me like a dialogue of content or opinion exchange. I felt that women of a certain class or in certain positions used that style of language more frequently. For example, in settings of *Noh* performances, traditional Japanese dance, *ikebana* classes. There were some instances that I had no idea what I should respond with because the social pattern itself was already assigned which I was resistant to using and that's when I noticed that this is *keigo*! The school where I was educated was supposed to prepare us for situations as such, but I was so resistant to learning that set of expressions when I was at school.

Y: Well, interpreting *keigo* solely as an "oppressive tool" can be misleading. Viewing language through the single lens of gender may make us miss some of the delicacy that language is capable of. Through my research, I've come to believe that in response to the liberation movement of the sixties, some American linguistic theorists like Lakoff developed and explored the concept of women's language and its relationship to power structures; specifically, powerless social groups in English-speaking societies. This theory was applied by theorists like Ide to other languages regardless of the uses of gender structures in other cultures. This perception of women's language as necessarily oppressive was still an influential theory in U.S. schools in the late 80s, for example Dale Spender's 1987 *Man Made Language*. Therefore, learners coming from a culture where for the past twenty years all gender specific language like indirect statements, tag questions and polite structures such as *keigo* has been perceived as a sign of women's lack of power would feel resistance to acquiring gender-specific structures in a second language. I think it's interesting to note that both Ide and Tannen in their latest books have modified their original stance to include larger views of cultural and social background when considering the nature of women's language.

H: So your idea is that modes of expression are just changes; but what if some changes of expression like *keigo* are repressive? If not in themselves, then in how they are used in a given society. According to Susan Gal, categories such as women's speech and men's speech are culturally constructed within social groups; "They change through history and are systematically related to other areas of cultural discourse such as the nature of persons, of

power and of a desirable moral order." Let's look at something relative to *keigo*. Perhaps you use *keigo* so unconsciously because you come from a "*keigo* background," a privileged class background where *keigo* usage is viewed as a social competence. What about a different structure or language type, for example, when you went to the U.S, for graduate school, did you feel any uneasiness adapting your personality to the interactive expectations of the other students and teachers?

Y: Yes. As a matter of fact, when I started using English, I felt it very difficult to express myself directly. I was relatively independent for a Japanese woman even then, but even though I was fluent in English, I could not put myself forward and present myself publicly the way other students were doing. I was playing the role of a cute little woman.

H: That is exactly my point. You had to express yourself, right? When I was learning *keigo*, it was exactly the opposite. I couldn't express myself. A set of acceptable responses were already assigned to me, and there was no other way around it. One of my female classmates actually left Japan early. She said that she felt "dead" in Japan because she couldn't express her feelings in Japanese; she was frustrated! My response to this problem was to avoid "*keigo* situations." I felt it would have been too emotionally draining for me to put myself in social situations where I couldn't express myself freely.

Y: Yes, but for me that "*mauvais-quart-d'heure*" wasn't an intrinsic hindrance. It was merely a learning pause. After observing the students, I joined in class discussions and casual conversations easily and directly. The outspoken graduate student is still one of my "rich" linguistic personae. You see me use it in department meetings. And I use *keigo* to project another kind of persona. *Keigo* is just one more strategic method of acting.

D: So we are looking at language as a sort of costume party. We can be what we want to be at any given moment.

H: What if you cannot afford to buy the costume? Is *keigo* available to uneducated people?

D: This is getting beyond polite structure. Here is our lunch, let's eat.

II. Just Desserts

H: These are really great vegetarian sandwiches.

D: Roast beef sandwich is also delicious, and the bread is so well made.

Y: You know they have their own bakery here. If you think their sandwiches are good, you should try their cakes.

H: Cakes? You know us and sweets. (to waitress) *Sumimasen. Dezaato menu wo onegai itashimasu.*

Y: I noticed, Hisun, you just used a polite form without much difficulty.

H: Actually, as I mentioned before, my feelings about *keigo* have changed since starting at our school. I realize I have to use it here. In fact, I found that the university is a perfect place to practice my "honorific negotiation." Before my job interview, I practiced *keigo* furiously. Not that I felt that I had to "humble" myself in order to get the job, but the fact that I could manipulate *keigo* if and when the situation called for it, gave me a lot of power and self-confidence at the interview. It would have been pretty stupid if I had gone into the interview with twenty big professors and no knowledge of *keigo*. As I listened to myself talking, it wasn't only *keigo* that I manipulated, but academic language also. But doesn't this bring up the whole issue of gender, language, and class we touched on before lunch? In Japanese, interview language itself is built in polite structure, so it was inevitable for me to learn *keigo*.

Y: All the male professors, including the deans, used *keigo* to you, too. It was a reciprocal transaction. *Keigo* is simply the level of language that you have to acquire as a part of the group. Let's not talk just about *keigo*. Any groups or situations call for using a specific language to function effectively.

H: I can agree with you in some ways. The fact that I could carry out a conversation in *keigo*, maybe not in its most polite form, but in the register where I felt comfortable, helped me to feel a sense of control in my public presentation of myself in Japan. But I still feel a "total surrender" to *keigo* constitutes a virtual re-construction of identity; one based not on personal experiences or politics, but on "symbolic social capital," dictated by an "outside" social order. The problem for me is that acquiring *keigo* is not about building or expressing self through language, but is about superficially upgrading your worth as a social property in public relations. In other words, an individual's ability in honorific manipulation dictates your value in "bureaucratic reality." The identity was, therefore, only produced by "social compliance," that is approved social and linguistic interactions, not by individual intentions.

It's constructing a superficial public identity that is completely split from your personal, or what I would call an "interior" identity. I felt, as a woman and as an individual, I had to resist that construction.

D: I think I understand your point. But some of your terms are new to me. Could you explain what you mean by "social capital," "social compliance" and "bureaucratic reality"?

H: I borrowed these terms from Gumperz' *Introduction to Language and Social Identity*. By "social capital," I am referring to the apparent status we assume in the public sphere. By "social compliance," I am referring to the willingness of the speaker to conform to the social structure set by a specific linguistic standard. By "bureaucratic reality," I mean the modern industrial hierarchical public sphere we live in.

D: Perhaps this situation arises because over the last twenty years in America, we have consistently down-played the reality of class and race differences in our language, at least on a superficial level. This is particularly linked to the development of the liberation ideologies and their efforts to transform public discourse.

H: You mean, creating some kind of overlap between public and private personae?

D: Actually, the idea is to replace the public persona of chosen registers with the private persona developed via the personal politics of liberation. Through the process of liberation, we are supposed to reject the need for polite structures, which symbolize the residue of the linguistic barriers that we have at least superficially overcome. However, in reality, the power barriers of gender, race and class remain in society and we have simply lost various registers in our language, sometimes to our detriment. We might consider this example. I was taught that one of the most important points for using polite language was when addressing people of lower status, for example, making requests for services, you are supposed to use the most polite form possible. I am still surprised when people use impolite forms when addressing secretaries and waiters, etc. It was emphasized that if I have the power, my language should be softer. You can't erase the reality of a power structure by a superficial linguistic equality. If we face up to our "political" realities of our lives, then we will return a richness to our linguistic choices.

H: Intellectually speaking, I think that is true, David. However, it is the very discrepancy between public and personal identities that perpetuates a sort of social "schizophrenia," a split epitomized in modern industrial society between private and public lives. This runs along the

paradigm of modern society where our many "different" identities are compartmentalized and policed separately. I wanted to propose a new model by collapsing the two apparently "alienated spheres" in which we function linguistically. I believe it is important for our public language to match our personal political aspirations. Politeness undercuts this effort. It allows you to tacitly agree with a statement you may personally despise.

Y: I can't agree. Look, women in Japan are certainly disadvantaged. In jobs, in promotion, in politics, women are ignored. If I want to change that, I work to change a specific situation. One woman refusing to use *keigo* doesn't change anything. It's just one woman who won't be able to make her way in any "social negotiation." I think this is the same for all languages. Do you feel that your public and private identities are less "alienated" when you speak English?

H: I feel that in English, I can make an effort not to alienate the two different selves that are created in our reality.

Y: Even though you do use polite forms?

H: Right. Yet, the content of my expression stems from within me, which is a crucial difference. Imagine for god's sake, having a name like "Hisun," living in America. I was the only Asian kid in my high school. I felt I had to defend my name, everything I do and I am every step of the way. Going back to two distinctively split identities where you have yourself and a different persona that you present in public, for me, symbolized precisely regression in my personal politics.

D: This sounds like you believe that everyone has one essential persona that is buried or "repressed" beneath all our "social" personae. My ideas on language are more in line with Goffman's concept of "portraiture." He says that human beings are constantly constructing "artful poses" of themselves for the benefit of their audience via language; and receiving "glimpsed views" of other people by the same medium.

Y: So it's not language as a costume party, but language as a performance as I said before.

H: I still feel your views of language as "dressing up" whether for a party or a performance are based on your backgrounds. It's easy to look at language that way if you grew up with Yoshiko's "rich linguistic tapestry" as your heritage. What if you only had a single linguistic thread?

Y: That sounds like Bernstein's study done in 1960s. He claims children from working class in England learn only "restricted code" as against children from middle class who also acquire "elaborated code" which gives middle class children advantage in society. By "restricted code" he meant a variety of language whose structure is simple and formulaic; for example, the sort of short sentences of limited vocabulary with simple syntax always in the active voice used in daily interactions, while an "elaborated code" would be a language of complex structures and vocabulary used to express abstract ideas and personal feelings. I can see his point considering the time and the place he conducted his study, in England where people were more class conscious and lived in closed society. But his view of linguistic hindrance is limited to a single hierarchical structure. My problem with his study is his static and fatalistic view on language. He portrays language acquisition as a once-in-lifetime event that determines your fate. You seem to have a similar outlook. You say, here is the nature of language and that's that. But, the problem is really in the personal perception you bring to a linguistic event. Class distinctions are a social problem with a social solution. Language is not hierarchical, people are. Perhaps it would help if we think of language not as a barrier but rather as a game. Each situation, each linguistic event has its own "rules." Learn the rules and you can win, or at least play.

H: Well, then, if language is just a choice and hindrances arise from lack of information, where does that leave us as teachers.

D: It leaves us with these scrumptious looking chocolate cakes. *Itadakimasu.*

III. Postprandial Discussion

D: You know, (munch) chocolate was called "the food of the gods;" it was used as a sacred and sacrificial drink in ancient Meso-America.

Y: Well, I always say, "there's no problem that doesn't look better from the end of a chocolate bar." (crunch)

H: Umm, (gulp) at least we all agree on something. *Yoshiko-sensei*, could you pass me a napkin, please?

Y: You know, you can call me "Yoshiko" anytime. Your calling me "Yoshiko-sensei" is a good illustration of what we were talking about earlier; the problem of seeing the larger "tapestry" of language through the myopia of a specific lens. Why combine the intimacy of Yoshiko with the formality of *sensei*? Was there any reason that you couldn't call me Yoshiko from the start of our working relationship?

H: Well, I didn't feel comfortable at first. I guess I feel a sort of social barrier. I mean you are older, and more established than me. Maybe, a feeling of respect? Maybe because I tried to communicate with you more in Japanese at first? We had two distinct social relations going simultaneously, one in Japanese and another in English. Were you offended that I didn't easily call you by your first name?

Y: Yes, and you still sometimes call me "Yoshiko-sensei" which is half-way between "Yoshiko" and "Takahashi-sensei." I felt you were my work peer from moment you were hired. But you felt some status difference that caused this particular linguistic hindrance. There was no expectation on my part, just perception, or mis-perception, on yours. You still sometimes sound uncomfortable calling me by first name whereas David called me by "Yoshiko" immediately.

H: Maybe it was easier for David to feel your equal because he is closer to your age? Do either of you think that age is a factor in your views on language? I am always questioning my "identity politics." The whole process tends to get very personal, and, maybe, having another foreign language challenge my "identity" complicates the process even further. Maybe, you, Yoshiko and David, are "privileged" by age and status with a wider realm of social interactions. I am always the minority, a woman, the youngest one, so having to lower myself, I was disabled from asserting myself or making my own mark. For someone to say, "Why don't you humble yourself by using these polite structures?" made no sense.

Y: I feel that you are confusing real status with linguistic norms when you see *keigo* or any linguistic structure as a type of force or oppression. You are misperceiving the very real barriers of gender, race, or class with what we might call "cultural frames" of language. That is, the language used by specific groups for specific purposes. People sometimes bring social misperceptions to a linguistic event and these perceptions, and not any linguistic barriers, lead to language misuse. Like not using first names in a collegial conversation.

D: Hisun, do you consider that using phrases like "symbolic social capital" or "bureaucratic reality" is humbling yourself? You've been using academic language throughout this conversation because it is appropriate to our specific purposes. You are not using it because you are young, old, a woman, a man, from here or there. The language itself is neither elevating or humbling, simply descriptive. Academic language can be used in certain situations to be exclusionary and to keep people from joining in a debate. But the language itself doesn't do this. It's the people who use, or rather misuse, academic language as a tool who set up the barrier.

H: So are you proposing language as a "fixed reality" or can we try to transform language as a way to transform our pre-existing social reality? What about the debates on Japanese English as well? Can Japanese create their own English usage if they view English as an international language, not necessarily specific to any one nation? Who decides on the standard by which we must function in language? For example, I like to use the term, "girls" or even "oriental girls" because it is powerful, subverting the very name that usually suppresses my social status and upsets the "Politically Correct" syndrome. It's claiming the language of the "oppressor" to highlight the pre-existing social hierarchy. In Japan, now young girls use *boku*, which is a male equivalent of *watashi*, I, first person subjective case pronoun. However, this subversiveness is only appropriated through taking on a foreign identity, not of one's own gender. Couldn't we also be subversive in our honorific usage in a similar way? By not "performing" my expected *keigo* role, to use your image, Yoshiko, this would implicitly question the social hierarchy of sex, status, race, and all the other things we've spoken of. Can't we challenge the social reality through our personal use of language?

Y: Language is an agreed upon medium of exchange like currency. As we go from country to country we change our money; as we move from interaction to interaction we change our language registers. If you challenge a language structure by yourself you can "lower" your exchange rate. But, if we enter the "language market" as a group, like women, then we create a new denominator, as it were, a new value of exchange.

H: Why, Yoshiko, you sound like a revolutionary. So we both acknowledge that language can have political resonance; you just want to approach it by mass action and I want to start the work myself.

Y: Umm. We still have a big difference. My position is that language is just a reflection of society. You eliminate gender bias in Japanese society, and it will disappear from the

Japanese language. As I said before, changing the language doesn't change social attitudes. If I suddenly started using so-called "masculine" Japanese, nothing would change as far as my position at school or in society. It's not the politeness or rudeness of language that does challenge social reality. For example, in Samoa, women's language is described as "rough" that is direct, while men's language is "refined" that is polite, indirect. So the same values that you see as oppressive in Japan, and that you want to challenge, are reversed. It's not the gendered language, it's the real position of women in society that we ought to challenge.

H: But language is not a simple currency. It is more like a virtual reality site on the web where an individual by his or her choices in usage can construct a public identity, one that is seen by the other site users, that corresponds to a personal identity. And the possibility of this challenge to our deeply held social beliefs is easier in a second language where we haven't internalized all the social messages. Language reflects social reality, and we're so used to our first language concepts that we can't see how our own language highlights who holds the power.

D: Well this sounds more like Yoshiko sees language as a fluid medium and you Hisun seem to be implying that language is a series of signs whose worth is determined by how close the signs come to some sort of absolute truth like a just society, or liberated individuals.

H: I'm not sure that Yoshiko's "free exchange" is really fluid. It's a pre-assigned fluidity. You can move from currency to currency but the rate of exchange has already been determined by the powers that be and carries the messages of those powers, like the belittling of women via language.

Y: Language is a "power" only when it's used by people who already have power.

H: Well, can I move away from power for the moment? I want to envision language learning as a personal experience, a quest. There shouldn't be "teacher/insider" expectation, but learner perception. Each learner is on a personal quest: "How am I going to shape the language I'm going to learn?" I know this "language of the search" isn't all that easy, but the effort to construct it is a worthwhile process. So *keigo* was one area for me where I could "challenge" Japan as a foreigner...

Y: As a foreigner? Not as a woman? That's important!

- H: As an outsider, I didn't have an identity, except as an outsider, a *gaijin*. I had to build an identity accepting some things and rejecting others. As I've become immersed in Japan, as I've become a part of society and this university, my feelings about the language has changed. When I recently made an answering machine message for my office, I tried to avoid the most humble structure, but I noticed that my language sounded too rough. I felt I had to put in *de gozaimasu*.. But I did this because I felt it, not because it was expected.
- Y: Maybe this is the best joke. I don't use *de gozaimasu* on my office machine where I want to be in my professional mode, but I do have it on my home machine because I consider it a social nicety.
- D: This is heart of the issue. It's not the language itself, it's the learner's perception of what the language represents. We have such different reactions because we each have a different perception of how we have experienced language in our lives and how we use language. Hisun sees the importance of taking an individual stand on personal language. The point we should remember is that this is important because sometimes it is the only stand that relatively powerless groups are free to take. The long road to liberation could well begin with a single word. On the other hand, Yoshiko wants to opt for the pragmatic position; we should keep an eye on our real goals of social change, but work within a linguistic structure that does not needlessly alienate other people. You two will never finish this discussion, but I've finished all the cake! Let's get the check and get back to the office we have to start working on our paper for the "Language Education and Gender" publication. Now what do you think would be a good topic for a paper?

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